

FRONT: PARKLAND CONFERENCE • 9 / MUSIC: STINK MITT • 32 / FILM: CASA DE LOS BABYS • 41

EDMONTON'S 100% INDEPENDENT NEWSWEEKLY

VUEWEEKLY

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

NOV 13 2003

CHRIS CRADDOCK'S NEW PLAY WON'T LET SLEEPING GODS LIE

DREAM LIFE

[BY PAUL MATWYCHUK • 47]

No. 421 / NOV. 13 - NOV. 19, 2003
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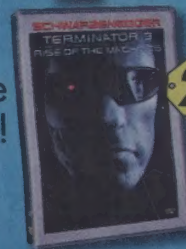
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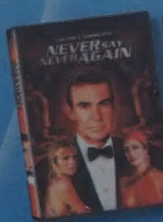
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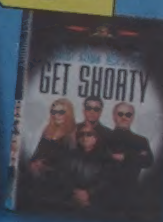
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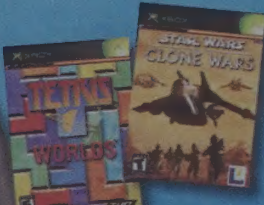
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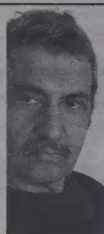
ON THE COVER

Chris Craddock is already such an experienced theatre pro, he could probably write a play in his sleep. Well, maybe not, but in *Dream Life*, his new collaboration with Jonathan Christenson, he delivers a 75-minute monologue while supposedly lying in a coma • 47



FRONT

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yourVUE

The other side of Heaven

I am writing in regard to Josef Braun's review of Jon Krakauer's book *Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith* ["Latter day sinners," October 2-8]. I understand that I cannot voice my opinion of the book itself to you, though I do have problems with it, but I am rather disappointed in Braun's depiction of the book.

I suppose my biggest complaint is that Braun treats this book as being a sound, factual depiction of Latter Day Saints life and history, which it certainly is not. Braun says that the book is "well-researched" and treats it as such, yet there are numerous fallacies and misrepresentations throughout the book. From the erroneous definition of celestial marriage, the inaccurate depiction of the practice of polygamy, to labelling LDS as sexist and racist, this article is heavily

skewed. I have never even heard of the "concept of 'blood atonement,'" as Braun describes it, although I have been a devout member of the LDS church for over 25 years.

I wonder how many LDS friends and associates Josef Braun consulted before submitting this review. A minimal exposure to the LDS faith would quickly reveal the inaccuracies in Krakauer's book and disconnect the atrocities committed by the Lafferty brothers and others from the LDS church. The Lafferty brothers are no more representative or affiliated with the LDS than "Prophet Onias" is typical of an Edmontonian. Why don't we make the connection of Onias to Edmonton in the same way that the Lafferty's are connected to the LDS church? One could reword Braun's article to read "If Onias is deemed insane... what does that say about Edmontonians in general!"

The "many violent, appallingly deceitful acts and all-out massacres that can be found throughout Mormon history" have been done to LDS,

not by LDS, as Braun's article insinuates. The Elizabeth Smart case, which Braun notes, is an excellent example of such wrongs today, as she and her family are devout LDS. I respect Krakauer as an author, but sadly this new book is highly slanted and largely fictional, at least in its presentation of the so called facts. I guess I just expected more from Braun and *Vue Weekly*. It really would not take much investigating or research to uncover the facts and also find the other side of the story. I have ranted long enough. Thanks for your time. —Tom ALSTON, EDMONTON

Vue Weekly welcomes reader response, both positive and negative. Send your opinion by mail (Vue Weekly, 10303-108 Street, Edmonton, AB, T5J 1L7), by fax ((780) 426-2889) or by e-mail (letters@vue.ab.ca). Preference is given to feedback about articles in Vue Weekly; we reserve the right to edit letters for length and clarity. Please include a daytime telephone number.

In the Future Shop October 30th flyer The following CDs were incorrectly advertised as 2 for \$22 or \$11.99 each. The actual individual price for these CDs is \$12.99 each.

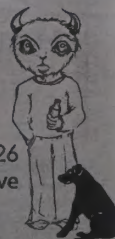
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Issue Number 421

November 13-19, 2003

available at over 1,400 locations

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Vue Weekly is available free of charge at

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Weekly is a division of 783783 Alberta

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By NATASHA LAURENCE

Street emotion

I knew about Linda Dumont long before she knew about me. Starting in 1994, Dumont wrote regularly for *Our Voice*, Edmonton's original street newspaper. One of the dangers of being a published writer is that you send yourself, in the form of words, out into all kinds of strange company. Anyone can take you home and, if they sit still long enough and focus their eyes, you will talk to them. They don't even have to make you tea.

I came to Edmonton in 1994 with my three young children and moved into a Capital Region Housing townhouse. My marriage was ending and, having been a stay-at-home mom, I had no idea what I was going to do next. I was grateful, I have to admit, for the monthly cheque from the provincial government and the subsidized housing. Very grateful. Both of those things allowed me to create a little order for my family in the midst of chaos. (Those were much better times to be struggling in Alberta, but that's another story...)

I bought *Our Voice* regularly, read it from cover to cover and, through reading the paper, came to know Dumont. Her strength of character, as revealed in the stories she told about her own life and the people she met through her work in street ministry, inspired me. I formed a picture in my mind of a strong, resourceful, creative woman,

someone both outspoken and caring. When I actually met Dumont five years later, shortly after I was hired as the distribution co-ordinator for *Our Voice*, I realized there was very little about that mental image that I'd have to change. A couple of months ago, she told me she intended to start a new street newspaper, *Edmonton Street News*. "Can I help?" I asked.

The new paper, primarily published out of Dumont's house in McCauley and available on the streets of Edmonton as of November 12, has been a longtime dream of Dumont's. "From the time I first saw a street newspaper in 1993, I was fascinated by it—and I wanted to produce one," she says. "With that in mind, I studied journal-

work in street ministry. The street newspaper brings both things together in one stream. We're giving a voice to people in poverty and to the issues surrounding poverty. There are so many stories from the street. I think if people read these stories they will come to understand the people I know as my family and as my friends. I was also a newspaper vendor for 10 years. I know what it's like to live on welfare. I know what it's like to support myself on only the sale of the newspaper. Through all my experiences, I've learned a lot; publishing my own paper is a logical step. I've met some very supportive people. A lot of the people who are regular customers are very caring people. Although you do get people, like one person who told me when I was selling the paper that I'd make more money as a prostitute."

After *Our Voice* shifted its editorial direction under new editor Warren Bjarnason in the spring of 2003, now focusing (from the perspective of Dumont and myself) on bigger-picture social justice issues rather than local urban poverty in an attempt to appeal to a broader audience, Dumont became increasingly convinced that the time was right for another voice on the street. She's printing 2,000 copies of the first issue of *Edmonton Street News*, which will sold by street vendors who'll profit from each copy they sell. "We can offer people something to read that's not going to have the same content as *Our Voice*—an alternate paper," says Dumont, who hopes to increase circulation in time for the Christmas issue after she sees how the first issue sells. "I hope people will read both, because there won't be any crossover of information between the two. We will be operating our own distribution system and, to avoid competition with *Our Voice*, which comes out on the first of every month, we'll publish in the middle of the month. I see the two papers as complementary. There's no animosity. I really owe a lot to them. I learned a lot



Save us duration. They need paper 30 hours per hour.

ism and graduated from Grant MacEwan in 1999 with the goal of someday editing a street newspaper."

Her fascination with street newspapers is rooted in several things. As Dumont explains, "I'm a writer. I also



Linda Dumont

through *Our Voice*. This is just the next logical step for me."

Nearly a dozen volunteer writers and photographers contributed to the debut issue of *Edmonton Street News*, with Dumont serving as the publisher/editor and myself as her co-editor. Dumont's vision for the paper is straightforward, a return to the basics of the street newspaper movement. "I think it's important to have people tell their stories in their own words," she says. "We can't empower people. Nobody can do that for someone else, but being able to tell your story does make a person feel empowered. In the first issue, we have Leonard Selamio speaking about his encounter with police brutality and Dave Berg talking about what it's like to be HIV-positive."

After the first issue is published, *Edmonton Street News* will become the newest member of the North American Street Newspaper Association. "I've been to five NASNA conferences," Dumont says. "It's very important to maintain that connection and get that support. Street newspapers are not just an Edmonton thing; it's a worldwide movement. There have always been papers sold on the street, but it was largely in the '90s that they became visible in major cities throughout North America, to provide income and advocacy for homeless people and people living in poverty. I think the movement has impact, because we print the news that's often played down in the mainstream media. People who are impoverished don't really rate that much coverage. We want to be a venue for these voices."

Practically speaking, the project is a labour of love. "We're starting out with a zero budget," Dumont says. "I'm doing the layout and design. All the people writing for the paper believe there is a need to get this voice out, so they're willing to donate their time. We're hoping to raise enough money to cover the printing of the first issue, but I'm working extra shifts, just in case. We have a couple of ads, but until the paper actually comes out it's difficult to sell advertising. In the long run, we're hoping through paper and ad sales we can get to the point where we can cover the printing and maybe pay the writers."

While starting an independent newspaper is a daunting task, Dumont is excited to be on the brink of both realizing a dream and continuing a mission. "I just believe strongly," she says, "that this is something that needs to be done." ☐

Natasha Laurence is the former managing editor of *Our Voice*.

1870? Been there.

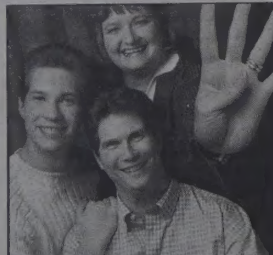


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LABOUR

AFL president accuses A-Channel of "libel chill"

EDMONTON—The union representing striking A-Channel workers and the Alberta Federation of Labour last week filed a \$6.25 million lawsuit against the station. The statement of claim sent to the Court of Queen's Bench says that a letter from an A-Channel lawyer to local media outlets warning them not to publish union advertisements was defamatory and contained falsehoods. The union, CEP Local 1900, and the AFL argue that the station was trying to muzzle strikers by preventing them from communicating with the public through newspaper ads.

"It's a huge irony," says AFL president Les Steel. "Here we have a company that's in the business of disseminating news and information to the public. But when it comes to news and information from its own employees, they try to throw the muzzle on. It's the height of hypocrisy."

Vue Weekly was one of a handful of papers that received the lawyer's letter. "Anybody publishing this material will be sued," Gerhard Seifner wrote about the ad in question. But after a few minor changes to its content, *Vue* ran the ad, as did every other media outlet involved in the dispute—even the *Edmonton Journal*, albeit a few days later. "From our perspective," says Steel, "this is a clear example of libel chill. That this was one media company trying to intimidate other media companies just makes the situation that much worse."

A-Channel workers went on strike on September 17 over wage issues, and concerns about jobs being transferred to the non-union A-Channel outlet in Calgary, which is also owned by parent company Craig Media. They have yet to settle on a first contract agreement with station management.

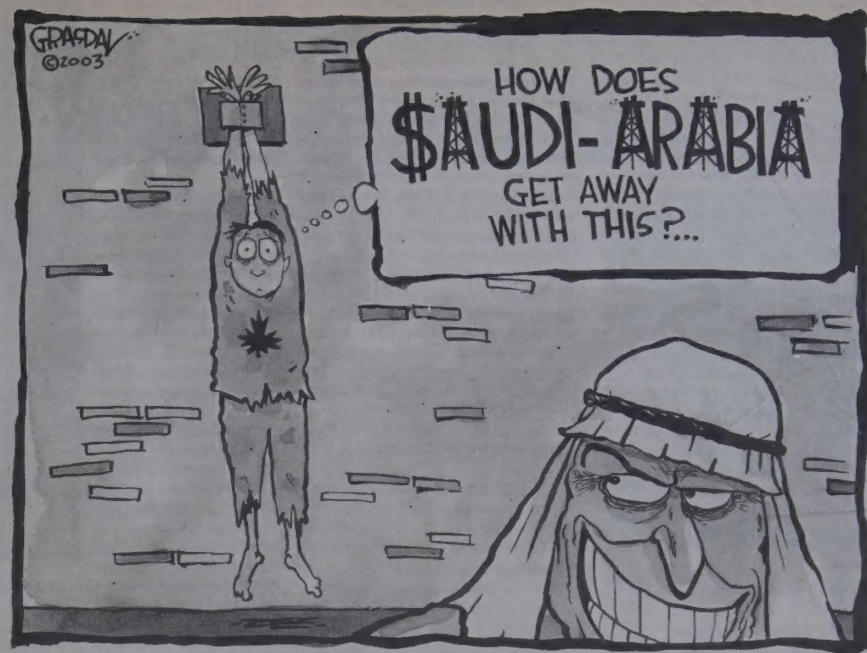
—DAN RUBINSTEIN

MEDICINE

Spinal cord research takes strides at U of A

EDMONTON—Thanks to a research team at the University of Alberta, science is one step closer to helping paralyzed people walk again.

Electrical muscle stimulation has long been acknowledged in scientific circles as a means of stimulating muscle movement in paraplegics, but developments in the technology have been stunted by the lack of a proper feedback system that would allow the finer muscle control required for walking. People with spinal cord trauma typically have intact muscles and peripheral nerves that control their muscles and, as such, electrical stimulation of the muscles is still possible. But until now, the neural feedback signals that would tell them how much or how little their muscles are being stimulated had no



way of getting back to their brains—which is where the research conducted by the U of A's Doug Weber, Richard Stein and Arthur Prochazka comes in.

"Using functional electrical stimulation, you can stimulate muscles to move," Weber said to the *Edmonton Journal*. "But to control that movement you need some feedback that can tell you what's going on, some sort of sensor that can tell you where the leg is. And that will tell you how much you should be stimulating."

According to the *Journal*, Weber's team developed their system by implanting a series of 36 electrodes into the dorsal basal ganglia of cats. The electrodes in the bundle of nerves that feed into the spinal cord are wired through the skin to a conductor, allowing for simultaneous recordings from many sensory nerves during normal activity such as walking. The hope is that these skin pressure recordings can be eventually fed back into the brain, giving the user a sense of spatial control. But despite the U of A's promising findings, Weber cautioned that science is still a far cry away from incorporating electrical stimulation and feedback loops into a working bioelectrical system. —CHRIS BOUTET

TRADE

EU imposes record-setting trade sanction on U.S.

BRUSSELS—After months of proving to the world that they, not Dale Carnegie, truly wrote the book on winning friends and influencing people, it seems the United States has finally pissed off the wrong people. In response to ever-increasing American tariffs on imported European goods, the World Trade Organization has given the European Union permission to make the U.S. the target of the largest economic trade sanction ever imposed by a member of the WTO—a move that could spell disaster for the American economy.

The WTO-sponsored sanction comes as the latest development in a

little-known but increasingly volatile intercontinental trade war between the U.S. and Europe that began last year when the American government imposed a 30 per cent tariff on European steel, a move the WTO considered "out of line" with America's supposed free trade commitments (and a notion Canadians are all too familiar with). According to a BBC report, the sanctions will be placed against selected imports of American produce, clothing and manufactured materials coming into Europe, resulting in price increases ranging anywhere from eight per cent to 100 per cent. The sanctions, which amount to 2.2 billion euros a year, will come into effect unless the U.S. drops its own trade tariffs by December 15.

The WTO's decision comes at a bad time for the tariff-happy U.S. administration, what with presidential campaign season just around the corner. And, both shrewdly and amusingly, the EU has deliberately opted to sanction products from states that are crucial to President Bush's hopes for re-election. Perhaps realizing that a multi-billion-dollar sanction against an already-floundering U.S. economy could be, uh, bad, the American administration grudgingly told the BBC that they will be "reviewing the WTO report carefully." —CHRIS BOUTET

ENVIRONMENT

U.S. prepares to battle "son of Kyoto"

DALLAS—The National Center for Policy Analysis, one of the most prominent think tanks in the United States, is already warning American lawmakers to be vigilant against any attempts by the international community to introduce a new environmental treaty if the Kyoto Accord fails as expected.

Two weeks ago, Swedish parliamentarians called upon the international community to begin working on a "Plan B" proposal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, fearing that Russia—which

has yet to ratify Kyoto—will back out and kill the existing accord. As the Swedes began to rally international support for Plan B, the NCPA warned U.S. president George W. Bush that he needs to go public as soon as possible to begin an anti-"son of Kyoto" campaign.

In a new NCPA policy paper, S. Fred Singer, president of the University of Virginia's Science and Environmental Policy Project, warns about a "son of Kyoto" lurking around the corner should the original accord fail. "The new baby will appear tougher," he writes. "An emission reduction at least double that called for in the 1997 proposal but, like all babies, it will have no teeth: a due date far in the future and no enforcement mechanisms. Its chief purpose will be to keep the huge UN climate bureaucracy in operation and re-energize the continuous rounds of conferences involving 'expert panels' and often full delegations from 180 nations—all at taxpayers' expense. To do away with this waste requires a firm stance by the White House and, following the example of Russian scientists, a willingness to speak out clearly against the junk science that is keeping alive the myths and scares of global warming."

Singer writes that Americans need to be more cohesive in their opposition to a new Kyoto-esque deal. He notes that even though then-president Bill Clinton signed Kyoto, the Senate rejected the proposal, sending a message to the Oval Office that Kyoto would never get through Congress. For three years afterward, Clinton had the rest of the world believing that America would sign on, despite strong opposition from the Republicans and even many Clinton loyalists among the Democrats.

Canadian environment minister David Anderson has already promised that even if the deal is scuttled, Ottawa will enforce the new emission standards set by Kyoto as a show of international goodwill and as a boost for the grain-driven ethanol industry, which could go from fledgling to booming in a world that restricts fossil-fuel emissions. —STEVEN SANDOR

By BOBBI BARBARICH

Moon squad

"Bobbi, it's just the moon," my sister said, exasperated that I wanted to take pictures of a magnificent orange ball rising out of a wheat-field, scattering pink light through dark blue clouds. I stood outside with my tripod snapping pics. In that northern Alberta field I wanted to capture the brilliance one doesn't see in the city.

After several years in Edmonton I got used to not seeing the sun set or the moon rise. It was only after visiting home near Grande Prairie a few years ago that I realized I'd never really paid attention. And now my 13-year-old sister is where I was, but hopefully through my "weird" actions she can appreciate the naked splendor we often ignore in our city, surrounded by thousands of people and lights trapped in 24-hour cycles.

It was with these thoughts in my head that I ventured out of my basement apartment last Saturday at 6:06 p.m. A lunar eclipse occurs only when the moon is full and when the earth is exactly between the sun and the moon (usually twice a year). Funny—I've been alive to see approximately 50 of them, but last weekend's eclipse was the first one I actually watched.

I wasn't alone in my curiosity. A young family joined me in a south-side playground. While the kids tried to stay warm by spinning their bodies around—"trying to knock their heads off," according to the boy—I discussed the red hue with their dad. I thought of my sister, how she doesn't talk to strangers and that she'd be surprised to see me so nonchalantly striking up a conversation with one. My upstairs neighbours were there too, and I formally introduced myself. Strange—we've lived in the same house for so long but had never really met. Mom and dad eventually left with their kids but I stayed outside with the other couple, collectively freezing our toes. We talked lunar logistics, but inside my head I wanted to tell them that when they have guests in their kitchen it sounds like they're in ours. Perhaps she wanted to tell me I slam the laundry door too loudly. But our camaraderie remained pleasant.

The thought occurred to me that we were watching our earth's effect on another piece of the universe. We were standing in a empty playground, connecting with one another, if only for the time it takes for the earth to eclipse the moon. So to my little sister, it's not just the moon. At some point we all must take a minute to stop and look where our shadows are cast. ☾



three dollar bill

By RICHARD BURNETT

Who reads short shorts?

I remember when my first short story was published years ago. I didn't get paid a penny, but it sure felt good to see my name and words in print.

That's how Montreal writer Chris DiRaddo feels (though I hope he at least got paid) about his first two published short stories, "When I See Him Maybe I'll Know" and "Closet," both of which appear in the just-released anthology *Quickies 3: Short Short Fiction on Gay Male Desire* (Arsenal Pulp Press).

"I always said I wanted to be published before I'm 30," says DiRaddo,

who is 29. "When they accepted both of my stories, I was totally elated—I think I actually screamed."

I've always had a soft spot for DiRaddo because he replaced me in 1996 as media point person for Divers/Cité, Montreal's Gay Pride organization, and he's done a bang-up job for them ever since. And as a PR hack for festival after festival over the years, I've always thought his press releases had a little zing. So it was with a big smile that I read his *Quickies* stories in bed the other night—especially "Closet," in which two young office workers duck into a closet for a little hanky panky.

"I used to foolishly chase after straight boys," DiRaddo writes, "but have now come to realize that it is truly the gay gaze that arouses my passion: bent boys whose faces become windows to the deep pull of their queer soul.... Like guilty boys who have sneaked ice cream, we wiped the wetness from around our lips and silently made our way back to our desks, leaving the closet door open."

When I told Vancouver-based

Quickies editor James C. Johnstone that DiRaddo is a friend of mine, he said, "I loved Chris's stories because they brought back memories of university."

Quickies also features a wonderful short by Vancouver author and dear friend Michael V. Smith ("I was one of the first people to publish Michael years ago," Johnstone says), as well as numerous other writers from across Canada, the United States, Britain, Australia and South Africa. "The book's title is a play on words because none of the stories are longer than 1,000 words," explains Johnstone, a 46-year-old father of a nine-year-old girl. "Sex is such a powerful force in our lives. It makes us do crazy things and I think that's fascinating. It makes me want to read about it. The thing that makes *Quickies* different from other erotic anthologies is that not all of the stories are porn stories. There are also funny stories and poignant stories. Sex is all of those things."

And in *Quickies*, all of it is refreshingly, gloriously gay. "Our sexuality, the taboo of gay sex, [still] gives an extra power and cachet to gay writ-

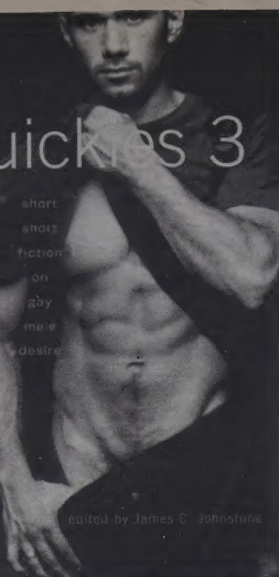
ing," Johnstone says. "It will be interesting to see if that can be maintained or will be co-opted in 20 years. I hope we never lose our edge."

A few quickies of my own

Reuters reports Rod Stewart is feuding with Sting ("The sun shines out of his arse," Stewart says) and his old friend Elton John ("My hair is real nice and looks it and hers doesn't"). Reuters says Stewart even dubbed Elton "Sharon."

Of course, what Reuters neglected to mention is that John's drag name is Sharon and Stewart's drag alter ego is Phyllis. In fact, Stewart wrote *Billboard's* first Top 40 pop song whose title character was gay ("The Killing of Georgie (Part One)") back in 1975. I noted that in a TDB open letter to Stewart when I tried everything to get him to sing "Sailing," my fave Stewart song, at his Montreal Forum gig in 1998. (I've now seen him perform live 13 times.) I later learned Stewart had read my open letter, but I'm still waiting. Next time...

It's always cool to see Felipe Rose of the Village People (he's the Indian), who ducked out to say hi to my friends and I after the band's October 28 gig in Montreal. Rose is a big booster of Native American rights and has justly been



short
short
fiction
on
gay
male
desire

Quickies 3

edited by James C. Johnstone

nominated for Artist of the Year at the upcoming Native American Music Awards. Surf to www.nammys.com/public or to Rose's own website, www.tomahawkrecords.com for more information.

Finally, word is that former PM Brian Mulroney is pushing openly gay Tory MP Scott Brison (interviewed in TDB earlier this year) to contest the leadership of a new united-right Conservative party as the "Pink Tory."

This leadership race could be fun after all. ☺

TOM the DANCING BUG



by RUBEN BOLLING

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Haiku Horoscope

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 19) You think too much, just Serve the egg first and wait for The chicken to cook	LIBRA (Sept 23-Oct 22) Expect the return Of a lost love this week, a Certain suave zombie
TAURUS (Apr 20-May 20) Nobody on the Bus wants to hear your true tale Of high adventure	SCORPIO (Oct 23-Nov 21) Some nuts but no sign Of a nutcracker—cruel fate Why do you mock me?
GEMINI (May 21-June 20) What the world needs now Is a movie about a Talking Dalmatian	SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22-Dec 21) Make some zany friends Hilarity will ensue Sell the rights to Fox
CANCER (June 21-July 22) Forget flies—a nice Millipede is the perfect Gift for a cruel child	CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 19) Just your luck—you will Get a job in the porn world As a janitor
LEO (July 23-Aug 22) Sometimes you feel like A nut, and by then it is Usually too late	AQUARIUS (Jan 20-Feb 18) Now that's what I call A sticky situation Laugh at Capricorns
VIRGO (Aug 23-Sept 22) The warm fire beckons Like an old friend, but resist The urge to hug it	PISCES (Feb 19-Mar 20) Whoever said dogs Were man's best friends did not know About their dark plot

by Jonathan Ball. Registered Fraud, www.jonathanball.com

Parkland Institute takes up the *Challenge*

Challenging Empire conference seeks to keep raising the ire of the powerful

By SHANNON PHILLIPS

"I don't like the Parkland Institute and they don't like me." —Ralph Klein, June 2003

"The intellectual," Palestinian scholar Edward Said once wrote, possesses "a kind of curmudgeonly disagreeableness" which allows the best thinkers to "remain outside the mainstream, unaccommodated, unco-opted and resistant." In a lecture series entitled *Representations of the Intellectual*, Said likens the experience of the intellectual to that of exile—"To be as marginal and as undomesticated as someone who is in real exile is for an intellectual to be unusually responsive to the traveller rather than to the potentate, to innovation and experiment rather than the authoritatively given *status quo*. The *exilic* intellectual does not respond to the logic of the conventional but to the audacity of daring, and to representing change."

In Alberta, it doesn't take much to get yourself the boot from the cozy world of the conventional and the status quo and into intellectual exile. Just ask the Parkland Institute. The very first book published by the institute, Kevin Taft's *Shredding the Public Interest*, dared to ask questions about the debt and deficit hysteria of the early 1990s. The book got Ralph Klein so riled he couldn't resist labeling Taft, a former bureaucrat for Tory governments and today the Liberal MLA for

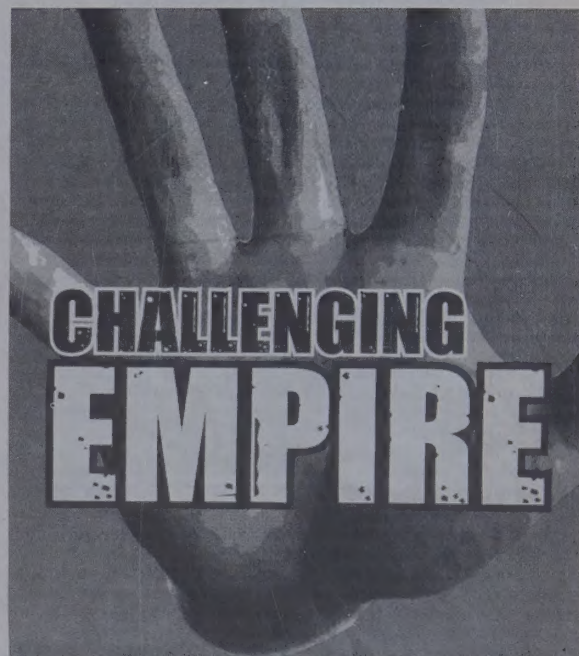
and private sector delivery of health-care services, among other topics. The Parkland's books and reports are generally accessible to the lay reader, but beyond publications, the institute seeks, in Acuña's words, "to broaden the scope of political debate in Alberta, not only by providing information, but also engaging directly in discussion and dialogue through programming." Thus, for the past six years, Parkland has hosted an annual conference, completely open to the public. "The hope is [with the conferences] to raise the ire of the powerful," notes Acuña.

Raising the ire, indeed. Like the Taft book, Parkland conferences have repeatedly drawn criticism from the premier's office. The 1999 conference, entitled *Poverty Amidst Plenty*, brought economist Armine Yalnizan to speak about Alberta's social services infrastructure and its many holes in our prosperous province. Yalnizan's talk prompted a response far more dangerous than tossing around a frivolous label such as "communist." This time, Klein wrote to the president of the University of Alberta demanding an explanation why the university would

PREVIEW EVENTS

Edmonton Riverview, a "communist," Ricardo Acuña, the current executive director of the Parkland, chuckles at the incident. "We got immediate government attention with our very first book," he says. "It announced our presence on Alberta's political scene."

THE PARKLAND INSTITUTE is a think tank affiliated with the University of Alberta's Faculty of Arts. Over the past seven years, it has published several books and a series of reports on issues germane to Alberta: oil and gas royalties, NAFTA and our natural gas reserves, liquor store privatization



SEE PAGE 12

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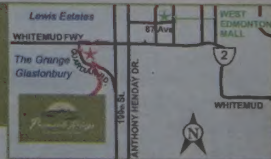
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Empirical evidence

Left-wing scholar Michael Parenti examines empire-builders from Caesar to Bush

By DENNIS SORON

Too often, the "new" ideas that surface in public debate are not new at all. They're simply rehabilitated versions of older ideas that have suddenly acquired a renewed sense of relevance. Much of the rhetoric we now hear about the wonders of the "free market," for instance, is merely a slick repackaging of an antiquated laissez-faire ideology that only began to regain credibility during the economic and political crises of the 1970s.

This should comfort those on the left who've grown accustomed to being told that their own values are hopelessly "outdated." It suggests that renewing the appeal of progressive ideas requires us not to abandon their "old-fashioned" content, but to translate them into a form that resonates with the changing circumstances people face today. In recent years, for example, the healthy book sales enjoyed by authors like Michael Moore and Noam Chomsky have not been a reflection of any philosophical shift on their part but of a new receptivity to non-mainstream views among people anxious about the course of a world awash in political deception, war and corporate greed.

In this climate, few progressive thinkers are better situated to speak persuasively to a broad audience than Michael Parenti, the keynote

speaker this Friday night at **Challenging Empire: Citizenship, Sovereignty and Self-Determination**, the Parkland Institute's seventh annual fall conference. For more than three decades, Parenti has been a leading light of the American left, serving up hard-hitting criticism on many of the issues—U.S. imperialism, terrorism, corporate domination of the media, the corruption of democracy by wealth and elite power—that now dominate our political landscape. A prolific writer, a dynamic speaker and a familiar guest on various radio and television talk shows, Parenti communicates in a provocative, historically informed and accessible style that's rare among activists and thinkers on the left. He

PREVIEW LECTURE

is the author of 17 books, the most recent of which, *The Assassination of Julius Caesar* (2003), has just been nominated for the Pulitzer Prize. We spoke on the phone recently.

Vue Weekly: In your 1995 book *Against Empire*, you lamented that the term "empire" had largely disappeared from our political vocabulary. Isn't this term now enjoying renewed popularity, among both critics and defenders of the U.S.?

Michael Parenti: It is true that proponents of U.S. policy are once again talking openly about "empire," only to see it as a benign thing that is bringing free market prosperity and democracy to countries across the world. Indeed, it is hard to deny that the U.S. is increasingly acting in a directly imperialistic manner. What we used to call "neo-imperialism" occurs when you control a country's

markets and trade and much of its investments and labour, but don't outrightly colonize, rule and own that country. What we're witnessing lately is not so much neo-imperialism as a return to an old-fashioned form of direct colonization, with the U.S. planting its flag in any number of countries. The U.S. today has troops in about 20 different countries, with bases in central Asia, the Middle East, central Europe, western Europe and other places—and that number continues to grow.

VW: Your most recent book deals with the Roman Empire in the era of Julius Caesar. What prompted your interest in this topic?

MP: I just found Rome very interesting and was rather impressed by the fact that many of its social realities have been misrepresented throughout history. The image most of us have of Rome is of Sir John Gielgud and Laurence Olivier walking around in togas, or of gladiators hacking away at each other in the arena and crazy emperors screaming commands. But Rome was a republic for about 500 years and many important political struggles took place there that the history books have tended to ignore.

I wasn't consciously trying to draw parallels with the present, but one can say that many of the issues and conflicts that exist today existed then too. For instance, the key issue in the late republic from 133 to 44 B.C. was land redistribution. People engaged in communal farming had been driven off land by aristocrats who created big plantations, or *latifundia*, run by slave labour. This was publicly-owned land that was forcefully privatized and taken over, and the focus of struggle was to get back some of that land for the people.



Michael Parenti

This is the very kind of struggle we see going on in Africa and Latin America to this day. The buying of elections, the use of propaganda, the use of death squads to kill popular leaders, rent-gouging, struggles over taxation and debt, bleeding the republic to pay for the empire—all of these struggles that took place in ancient Rome should also be very familiar to any modern reader.

VW: One focus in your work has been the ways dominant groups shape and control our understanding of history for their own political ends. Would you agree, however, that the main issue now in the U.S. is not so much the manner in which history is understood as the sheer lack of historical awareness among the general population?

MP: You're right—Americans are

incredibly ignorant of their history, and that ignorance is now being institutionalized with Bush's current educational reforms, which will ensure that kids spend even less time learning about their own history. In American political life, it is as if there is no yesterday. With each new crisis, U.S. leaders roll out the same scenario. They start demonizing a foreign leader, referring to him as "anti-West" or "anti-American" and parading him as some sort of threat. Lacking any historical perspective, the public simply gets frightened out of its wits and supports the government out of fear that some foreign menace is threatening our security. There is nothing original in this approach. U.S. leaders did it with Noriega, with Qaddafi, with Milosevic, with the

EVENTS

Poetry Night:

SUE SINCLAIR AUTHOR OF *MORTAL ARGUMENTS*

KEN HOWE AUTHOR OF *HOUSEHOLD HINTS FOR THE END OF TIME*
Friday November 14 at 7:30PM

MARGARET GUNNING
AUTHOR OF *BETTER THAN LIFE*

THOMAS TROFIMUK
AUTHOR OF *52ND POEM*,

CATRINA EDWARDS
AUTHOR OF *WHITER SHADE OF PALE*
Wednesday November 19 at 7:30PM

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Thursday November 20 at 7:30PM

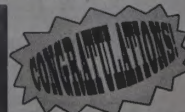
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Sandinistas. And they did it with Saddam Hussein, who truly was a terrible butcher, but one who the U.S. had supported years earlier. U.S. leaders used him and his Baathist party to destroy the Iraqi revolution. But when he began getting too independent, nationalizing the oil, pursuing self-development, they started demonizing him too. One way U.S. leaders get away with all of this is by keeping the public in a largely ahistorical misinformed state.

VW: You've called for the development of a "global anti-imperialist movement." What are some of the most promising sources of this type of movement?

MP: First, I would point to the "anti-globalization" movement. Here, you see growing numbers of people realizing that "free trade" is neither free, nor does it have much to do with trade. They are coming to see that the "free trade" accords are a Trojan horse for undermining the ability of people to self-develop and self-define. The free trade agenda elevates the property interest of foreign investors to a right that supersedes all other rights, overruling demands for human services, local production and anything else that can be construed as interfering with foreign investment opportunities. Not only does this hurt labour and environmental laws and public services; it also literally destroys whatever national sovereignty and whatever little democratic sovereignty countries have.

In addition to the movement against free trade, we have witnessed the emergence of a global antiwar movement of unusual magnitude. All over the world—from Mexico to Lithuania, from Indonesia to Spain, from Nigeria to Japan—we saw people marching in impressive numbers

against the war in Iraq, even before the war had started. This included many in countries that have no historical, ethnic or cultural link to Iraq. This suggests that they were marching not only out of concern for the Iraqi people, but out of concern for themselves, in protest of a U.S. leadership that increasingly has set itself up as the rulers of the planet. In



effect, they were rejecting the monarchical rule of a U.S. leadership which has arrogantly announced that it will honour no international treaties, will unilaterally attack anyone of its own choosing and will ultimately decide who lives and who dies.

VW: Can we expect much resistance to American imperialism to come from places such as Canada, which are highly dependent upon the U.S. and have traditionally followed its lead on most matters?

MP: There has always been resistance in Canada, from decades ago, with the first Free Trade Agreement, to the present day. Canadians have

often been ahead of everyone else in opposing such deals. The problem with Canada is not the Canadian people but the Canadian leadership, which represents the same class interests that the U.S. leadership does and is totally complicit with it on most issues. It is not the U.S. that has made Canada a little skiff attached to the American battleship, but collaborationist Canadian leaders—the ones who sign the FTA, NAFTA and the like.

The situation in Canada merely reflects the essentially undemocratic dimensions of all contemporary western democracies, in which the interests of the people are systematically violated by the elected leadership in these countries. In this regard, maybe we need to think less in terms of national units and more in terms of the economic interests that prevail within each national unit and how they collude. When Canadians start successfully fighting against the power of money and its ability to control elections, shape public policy and dominate the media, you will see a change in Canada's direction—one which steers a more independent course and takes into consideration the real interests of the Canadian people. Until then, Canada will remain a very junior partner to U.S. globalism. ☐

Michael Parenti speaks on Friday, November 14 at 7:30 p.m. in the Myer Horowitz Theatre. Tickets cost \$10 in advance (\$5 for students, low income) and \$15 at the door (\$10 students, low income). They're available at Earth's General Store, Audrey's Books, Kunitz Shoes, Greenwood's Volume II and the Parkland Institute. For more info, call 492-8558 or go to www.ualberta.ca/parkland.

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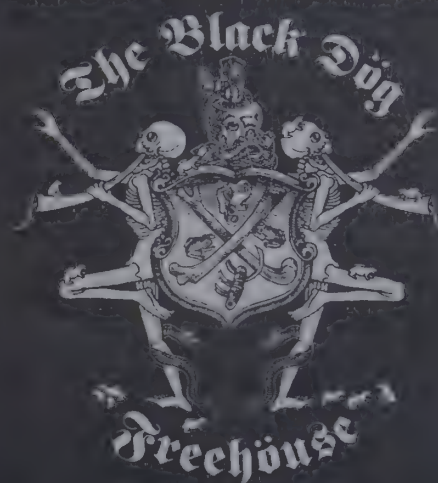
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Points of View: Murphy's laws

Rex Murphy's new essay collection is acerbic, witty and often self-contradictory

BY JOSEF BRAUN

In the introduction to *Points of View*, a collection of some 90 of his opinion pieces, Rex Murphy confesses that his earliest childhood memory is of watching former Newfoundland premier Joey Smallwood on television, thus sparking a lifetime of obsession with both politics and the boob tube. And in Murphy's writing and oration, Smallwood or Martha Stewart, Trudeau or Mary Hart, Bill Clinton or most especially Oprah Winfrey (that dominatrix of the popular consciousness whom he both loathes and is clearly enthralled with), are never far from reach in his family of idiosyncratic references. His (and supposedly our) world is forever skulking in the shadows of such monolithic personalities and he's seen fit to build a career around taking the piss out of all of them (and openly revering a few now and then too).

Murphy is in fact Canada's father of what he himself calls "opinion-mongering"; the sort of

wide-ranging pop-cultural punditry that is Murphy's trade didn't really exist before him. For nearly a decade now Murphy has been doing spots on *The National*, writing weekly columns for *The Globe and Mail* and hosting CBC Radio's *Cross Country Checkup*, and the copy he's churned out could no doubt produce several dozen volumes equal in length to *Points of View*. But what distinguishes the pieces he's selected to be bound together and open to a new level of scrutiny is the way they clarify just how much the dictates of

REVUE BOOKS

Murphy's very particular personality shape his commentary.

The pieces in *Points of View* are generally highly readable, respectful of their audience and often quite witty. Whether he's ranting about the inaccessibility of human beings when you call government services or phone or cable or power companies ("They don't want to talk to you. They don't even like you"), the politically correct-ification of everything ("This is the golden age of nit-pickery") or things you could do to get worse press than MP Tom Wappel ("You could take a chainsaw to the last redwood that was also the home of the last eagle and have it fall on the last panda"), Murphy's

got a well-worded, acidic barb for just about everything.

Yet as ably as Murphy articulates his grievances, they sometimes strain so far to address the "common man" that they also feel redundant: complaints you've already heard from everyone you know aren't necessarily something you need to read in the paper or hear on the radio or see on TV (or read in a book) as well. This same redundancy extends to some of Murphy's tributes as well—he writes about Shakespeare's legacy using precisely the same arguments regarding its universality as virtually every drama or English teacher I've ever met. (Murphy does better with Nabokov, whose prose he describes with a few bits of inventive precision that nearly do justice to the great writer's crystalline style.)

MURPHY TALKS a great deal about leaders and the lack of good ones in stock these days. His top three are revealing: Martin Luther King (a given), Trudeau (prickly, but who's going to argue?) and the Pope. No, really—the Pope. Though he regards himself as anti-conservative, what Murphy really is is a contrarian—and he's a pretty square contrarian at that. What I like most about Murphy's contrarianism is that he has a

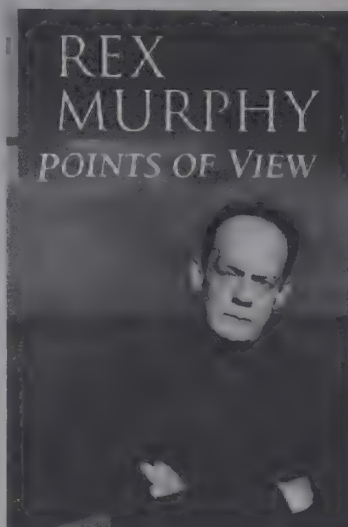
brilliant eye for wrangling hypocrites out into the light and chastising the hell out of them. But at times his desire to do so obscures larger issues, as is the case with his jabs against

Perhaps the most audacious bit of devil's advocacy in *Points of View* is Murphy's support of the Iraq War, something he feels so strongly about that he ends the book with an essay titled "The Removal of a Tyrant: George W. Bush Got It Right." Murphy resents the token sense of intellectual superiority that he feels colours many Canadians' opinion of the Bush administration or even the U.S. in general (though Murphy himself makes fun of Bush's linguistic inadequacies) and questions the decision not to support the war. He tries to clarify that he's in favour of ousting Saddam Hussein and not necessarily the dismal misadventures in nation-building and ideological colonization still unfurling in its wake, but how can we possibly separate these two events when one is a result of the other? And how can Murphy get so enraged when people excuse Clinton's lies about blowjobs while Bush is lying about his reasons for going to war and defying international law?

That's the disadvantage to collecting so many opinions in one place: you can contradict yourself just as easily as you do others. ☉

POINTS OF VIEW

By Rex Murphy • McClelland and Stewart • 293 pp. • \$34.99



environmentalism simply because he hates seeing wealthy consumers trying to absolve themselves by blue boxing or because David Suzuki sometimes uses scare tactics.

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CHALLENGING EMPIRE

Conference overview

Continued from page 9

fund such "anti-Alberta" scholarship.

The Parkland Institute's seventh annual conference, which runs from November 14 to 16, is entitled **Challenging Empire: Citizenship, Sovereignty and Self-Determination**. As Acuña explains, "there are two components to this year's conference. First, we will talk about U.S. empire, which is increasingly military on top of U.S. economic imperialism. And second, the implications U.S. empire has for Canadian sovereignty."

"It's not just the old-style, easy sovereignty of 'Canada for Canadians,' or wrapping yourself in the flag, either," he continues. "We want to talk about *sovereignty*—the experiences of immigrants and refugees and First Nations peoples, for example. These people have been largely ignored, in the past, by the traditional nationalist left, and yet they have direct experience with the worst of nationalism and U.S. empire. Many of our workshops deal with this problem of how nationalisms and the concept of sovereignty are relevant in a globalized world."

This year's conference is bookended by two prominent speakers: Michael Parenti (see page 11 for a preview of his talk) and Canadian writer Naomi Klein, of *No Logo* fame. Parenti will offer context and an historical discussion of how the U.S. projects itself outward and Klein will wrap up the weekend.

"Because of the last 11 years of documenting movements on the ground," Acuña says, "Naomi Klein's talk will hopefully project us forward and give us a sense of what other groups and communities are doing, after our weekend of talking about the issues."

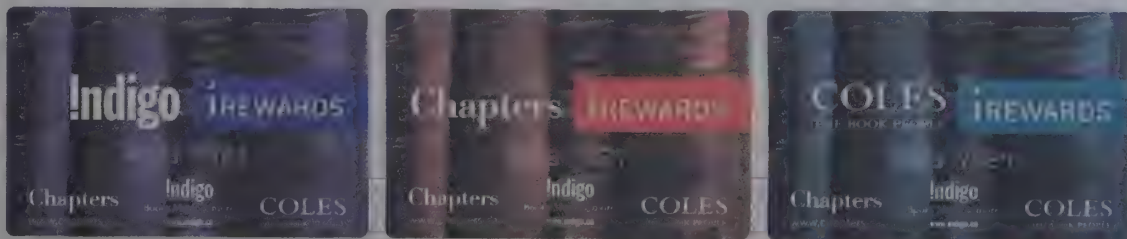
CHALLENGING EMPIRE is the Parkland's largest undertaking to date. "Our registrations have remained pretty stable since our very first conference, at about 350 full registrations every year," says conference co-ordinator Jane Wiley. "But this year, in terms of the calibre of the speakers and the number of well-known panelists, and also in terms of the number of people attending, especially those from out of town, this is by far our biggest conference ever. People also need to know that if they can't come to the whole weekend, it is possible to come to pieces of it."

As in previous years, the cost of attendance varies according to who you are: individual workshops and talks are \$5 for low-income and students and \$10 for everybody else if tickets are purchased in advance, \$5 more if bought at the door. Full conference passes range from \$60 to \$120, depending on whether you're a Parkland member, low-income or a student. Workshops will be held at the Engineering Teaching and Learning Centre (ETLC) on the U of A Campus. Further info can be found at www.ualberta.ca/parkland. ☉

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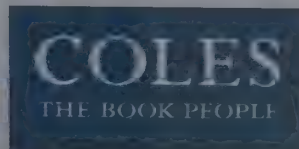
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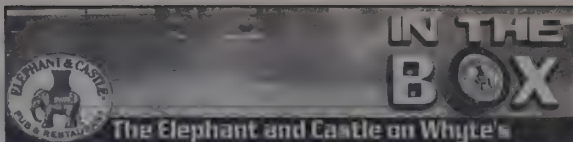
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BY DAVID YOUNG
 AND JOHN TURNER

The Oilers road trip continued last week with a 3-3-3 tie to Ottawa, a 4-1 loss to the Maple Leafs, a 5-4 win against the New York Rangers (sorry—Tom Potl, Anson Carter and Glen Sather) and a 3-4 loss to Boston. Highlights: Jarret Stoll scoring a goal in this season's debut game against the Rangers and another against Boston the next night; Raffi Torres scoring three goals in those same two matches; and Radek Dvorak, who has been the most exciting and most effective player this season, finally getting his first goal after hitting umpteen posts.

John: The Oil started this week with a game in Ottawa in which they took an early lead, fell behind by two and then ended up with a draw. What I noticed in that game was how Tommy Salo was able to let in a couple of very weak goals and then come up with some very big saves. I guess it all balanced out, right?

Dave: It balanced out enough for the Oilers to come up with a timely injury for Salo to get him back home to recuperate. His confidence was injured a year and a half ago in Salt Lake City, it seems. He hasn't been the same Tommy Salo who got the start for Sweden in the Olympics and repre-

sented The Rest of the World in the North America/World incarnation of the All-Star Game. The fluke Belarus goal that popped into the net off Salo's shoulder in the Olympics must still haunt the Swede. It used to take a long shot to beat Salo for a goal but now all the long shots seem to float past him. He's still nearly unbeatable on the breakaway, though. Even Brendan Shanahan couldn't put the puck past him on the penalty shot in the Red Wings game.

John: The Oilers always try their best to embarrass themselves when they play Toronto on *Hockey Night in Canada* and it was a similar story this past Saturday—except that it was Salo's performance that was embarrassing and not the team's. Letting in three goals on eight shots is unacceptable and Salo's "injury" is starting to look like a blessing. Ty Conklin came into that game and shut out the Leafs for the duration and then looked solid in the 5-4 win against the New York Rangers and the 4-3 loss to the Boston Bruins.

Dave: The Oilers have been through both Madison Square Garden and Boston. In the old days under Glen Sather, when a trade was imminent (e.g., the Mike Comrie lottery) those two teams were traditionally the Oilers' favourite trading partners. But that was

in the Glen Sather days. Why not shop Comrie to the Islanders? Isles GM Mike Milbury seems to always bite on Oilers trades. We might end up with another Raffi Torres out of the deal.

John: What has become apparent since the start of this road trip is that the rookies and sophomores are carrying this team right now. Raffi Torres has scored three goals in the last two games and Jarret Stoll has added two more. Both Jason Chimera and Fernando Pisani have also scored on this road trip. That's a large percentage of the team's offensive output coming from the most inexperienced players. Add in the fact that Ty Conklin has outperformed Salo every time he's been between the pipes and it doesn't look too good for Edmonton's veterans. Ethan Moreau always puts in a solid effort and it's not like the rest of the team has been dogging it, but a few more goals would certainly help.

Dave: Ryan Smyth has been tallying a pile of assists, but the young guys are scoring the goals. Smyth has been with the Oilers since 1994. Georges Laraque joined Edmonton in 1997, Moreau in 1998 and Salo in 1999. There really aren't any veterans on the team other than those guys. The constant trades and salary dumps just haven't allowed players to stay with the team very long. ☺

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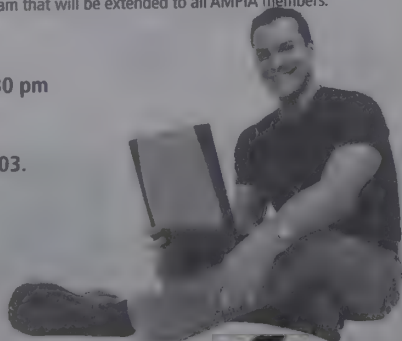
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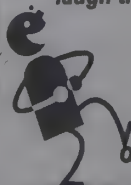
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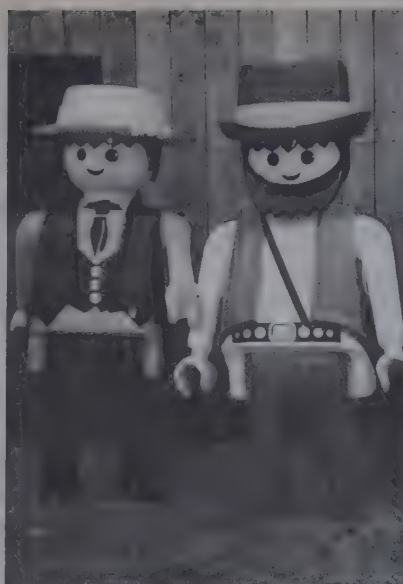
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Lego trip

Legoland battles Playmobil Fun Park for the soul of my imaginary adopted son

By CHRIS WANGLER

Recently I decided that I want to adopt a kid. It might be easier than finding a wife—or even a girlfriend—in today's sullied dating pool, and imagine the glory of raising Pablito, my boy, on my own terms, in my own unique image. Of course I'm not exactly sure how or where to get a Pablito or even how much he'll cost. All I know is that I want to be a better parent than the people who went to my high school.

With this goal in mind, I recently traveled to Bavaria to investigate theme parks created by my favourite Eurotoy concepts, Lego and Playmobil. After all, I need to think about these things before that bundle of joy arrives on my sunny doorstep, hopefully via expedited FedEx.

Legoland Deutschland is in Günzburg, an insignificant little city in southeastern Bavaria. Opened in 2002, it is the fourth such park in the Lego empire. The first and most famous is in Billund, Denmark, where Lego originated, with others in Windsor, England and Carlsbad, California. Last year the German park attracted more than 1.3 million visitors.

Superlatives do no justice to Lego, whose name comes from the Danish words *leg godt*, or "play well." Since 1949, the company has made more than 150 billion bricks from dyed granules of acrylonitrile butadiene styrene. Over the years, Lego has spawned many pale imitators, mostly notably the Pennsylvania-based company K'Nex, and even some satirists. Polish artist Zbigniew Libera, for instance, created a Lego concentration camp, complete with a fake box and serial number, back in 1996.

Needless to say, Legoland Deutschland features nothing so historically sensitive. Spread out over 120 acres and full of roller coasters, interactive areas and cafeterias, the park resembles Disneyland without all the long lines. Kids are clearly the intended victims, but while I was there I saw quite a few teenagers and seniors milling about, mostly around Miniland, a set of models built on a 1/20 scale, and, according to PR woman Kristina Krupp, the heart of every Legoland.

THE NINE MODELS, mostly of German landmarks, were built in Denmark with some 25 million bricks. The newest (and most regrettable) is a model of Neuschwanstein Castle, Germany's most recognizable tourbus trap and, incidentally enough, the model for the Disney logo. But the most remarkable scene was in the Berlin model. On the steps of the *Bundestag*, Germany's lower parliament, Lego artists had painstakingly recreated the Love Parade, Europe's techno-themed, bacchanalian version of Woodstock.

With several curious kids looking on, I hit a button in front of the model. Instantly, more than 100 Lego ravers began to dance animatronically as canned techno played into the overcast sky above. The figures, unlike their dinky counterparts in the Lego sets, were blocky and unrealistic, mostly because angular Lego bricks cannot be made to resemble human roundness. In spite of the poor verisimilitude, however, the scene was charged with the kind of quirky creativity that Gotfred Klir Kristiansen had in mind when he created the first Lego bricks 50 years ago. Nodding my

head, I thought of Pablito.

But if Miniland is a grand *homage* to the imagination, not to mention an unexpectedly cool symbol of German culture, the Lego product line is basically a lot of corporate dreck. When I was a kid, Lego bricks were always in assortments, stored either in factory boxes with clear plastic dividers or in ice cream buckets. Half the fun was in prying apart the pieces with teeth, with scissors, whatever. What makes today's Lego so different is a combination of prefabrication and corporate branding.

TRAVEL

The sets in the new German Lego catalogue, with themes such as Spider-Man, NBA, NHL and *Star Wars*, require little real building. Worst of all is the newest, most highly anticipated line—Harry Potter. Ugh.

PLAYMOBIL, by contrast, has always avoided corporate complicity. With a minor exception or two, its sets have never featured a corporate property. This integrity, unfortunately, comes at a cost: not only are the company's sets unusually expensive, but they are often hard to find in North American toy stores. But Playmobil really isn't for the unwashed, uninformed masses. It's aimed at the discriminating parent, like me, who will be inspired by the company's cool catalogues: like IKEA's, they have always been a major part of the mystique.

The Playmobil Fun Park, outside company headquarters near Nuremberg, is really just an enormous play-

ground, with giant sandboxes, a life-size pirate ship, a golf course and other kid-friendly oddities. Opened in 2000, it attracts 400,000 visitors yearly but shares none of the Disneyland qualities of Legoland, nor, for that matter, the inflated entrance price. Legoland costs 24 Euros for an adult day pass (about \$40 CDN), while the Fun Park is only five Euros.

When I was there, on Germany's strangely unpatrician Day of Unity, the Fun Park was jam-packed with maniacal German *Kinder*, easily among the loudest and most annoying in the world. The only evidence of the Playmobil product line were four-foot-high Playmobil figures, who stood ready for photo ops with shutter-happy German parents.

SADLY, the park does little justice to Playmobil's fascinating toys. Back in 1974, when the first line was released, only three themes were available: construction, knights and American Indians—always a German obsession. Since then, the figures and sets have multiplied to include themes from the world over and different eras in history, with a special emphasis on scenarios from everyday life.

After a glorious hour in the gift shop, I walked away with a bag full of figures and little trinkets for Pablito. For myself I bought an office set, including plastic ferns and a telephone, probably because it resembles an idealized version of my desk at work. The secret to Playmobil's success, at least as I see it, is *Fingerspitzengefühl*, an untranslatable word that means "unique sensitivity in the fingertips"—an uncanny ability

to get it just right.

It hasn't always been so. Some sets, such as the Eskimos of the mid-'80s, look politically incorrect in retrospect, although nowhere near as strange as the unreleased sets that remain in a sealed case in the office of Hans Beck, creator of the first Playmobil figures. These included troubadours with a muzzled bear, set with medieval punishments and even a group of Chinese railroad workers. Historical accuracy clearly has its limits.

Or does it? While you'd think that the company would avoid touchy themes at all costs, some Playmobil toys, like so much of Bavaria, display weird Christian leanings. Three years ago, as a joke I bought a Playmobil nativity scene for my brother, complete with mini plastic Jesus. In the new 2000 catalogue, the marquee toy is—no joke—Noah's Ark, described in press materials as "the modern version of the floating refuge, which makes biblical history easy to grasp for children."

Today's parents hate this kind of thing. They're overly sensitive to anything with a profound or religious message. Instead, they're content to let their children be inundated, day and night, with dispatches from techno-corporate world order. What sort of world will my Pablito live in? I can't say. But I'd rather have him know about the Great Flood, about the animal marching two by two and the cruel unpredictability of the powers of high, than Lego's version of *Attack of the Clones*. ●



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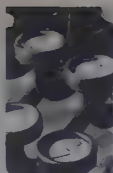
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By **CHRISTOPHER WIEBE**

Gift wins prize

Edmonton playwright **Vern Thiessen's** 2003 Governor General's Award for his play *Einstein's Gift* (Playwrights Canada Press) raises questions, for me, about the relationship between the stage and the printed page. If playwriting is always done with an eye to its performance—where the words will be “brought to life”—what kind of life does a play have on the printed page, in book form? “Any award of this type brings satisfaction because it is coming from one’s peers,” says Thiessen, whose victory was announced on Wednesday. “The difference with the GG is it’s a prestigious national award that is also a literary award. You are considered to be in the same league as writers of fiction, non-fiction and poetry, which is a huge thing.”

To be eligible for the GGs, a play must be published, which, as Thiessen explains, is no simple matter. “In order to get published you must be produced, so the play has to prove itself onstage first. In effect, you’re jumping through two hoops, with publication almost harder than production.” Out of the hundreds of

plays written and performed each year in Canada, fewer than 40 of them are published. Though playwrights don’t make any money from publication, it can be a vehicle to bring their play to the attention of theatre directors and students, not to mention a nice mark of prestige.

Thiessen wrote 12 drafts of *Einstein's Gift* over seven years before it was first produced in Edmonton this past spring and made further changes for a subsequent production in Kitchener-Waterloo. “Eventually you have to commit a version to a publisher,” Thiessen says. “Unlike film or a novel, a drama script is

roughly analogous to a novelist working with her literary editors and agents. A playwright can improve her work by hearing it in the mouths of actors, and it helps to market the play.

As current president of the Playwrights Union of Canada, Thiessen is actively working to raise the profile of playwriting in Canada. “I sometimes have trouble with people considering playwrights as literary artists,” he says. “Look at Shakespeare, for instance—people read his plays. Ibsen wrote *Peer Gynt* to be read in the salon; he never really meant it to be performed. There is a long tradition

Comedy is like working pastry; you have to have a light touch or else it will be hard and tough.

not as fixed in time or space. Given the interpretative nature of the medium, it always incorporates a little of the vision of the theatre company producing it.”

I wondered aloud to Thiessen about the literary devaluation of playwriting in recent years. Could it be that the “collective” nature of drama development and production has diluted the public perception of playwriting as a single-authored work?

Thiessen is quick to set me straight. “Playwriting is collaborative but not collective,” he says. “Unlike screenwriting, no one can change a word in a drama production without the playwright’s permission. A playwright is like an architect; they draw up designs that craftspeople will ultimately build. Some people might paint it blue, some pink, different people might live in it, but it is still the same play.” The workshoping of plays at centres like the Alberta Playwrights Network

of literary plays, and contemporary work needs to be recognized alongside them.”

I have a Gunning plan

Port Coquitlam writer **Margaret Gunning** reads from her spirited first novel, *Better Than Life* (NeWest Press), at Audrey’s Books on Wednesday (November 19) at 7:30 p.m. Set in 1968 in small-town Ontario, the novel mixes comedy and satire as it explores the emotional abandonment of sons by their fathers, and the enthusiastic embrace of Kahlil Gibran’s writing by spiritually yearning women. Its raft of characters includes Aubrey Connor, browbeaten by his 89-year-old mother Min, and Bob, a long-haired newcomer mistaken for Jesus. As in Stephen Leacock, the laughter occasioned by the small town subverts urban pretensions. “You can’t force humour, even if you need to work hard at revising

it,” says Gunning. “Comedy is like working pastry; you have to have a light touch or else it will be hard and tough.”

Gunning drew on her experiences in Hinton, Alberta, where she lived from 1977 to 1988, and began writing in earnest. As a young mother she would stay up until two in morning writing poetry, short plays and prose. She found an outlet in the community paper the *Hinton Parklander*, quickly moving from theatre reviews to a regular column about family life. “I had wanted to be a published author since when I was a teenager. Though I was hesitant to tell anyone, I was deadly serious inside.” Another novel, about the bullying of a young girl, is in the works.

You heard me, Coltrane

Toronto-writer **Kent Nussey's** strong first novel *A Love Supreme* (The Mansfield Press) delves into the nature of solitude and the spirituality of jazz. This sharply focussed novel explores the life of Omar Snow, a struggling middle-aged musicologist writing a book about jazz legends Thelonious Monk, Charles Mingus and John Coltrane that is more of a personal, visceral interpretation of their music than a straight biography. Omar wanders the streets of Toronto gleaming auditory straps of insight and develops an uneasy relationship with Carrie, an underemployed actor. Nussey published two story collections in the '90s, *The War in Heaven* and *In Christ There Is No East or West*. While *A Love Supreme* occasionally discloses too much in a flurry of “meaningful” sentences, it is an intense and impressive novel that plumbs art’s spiritual wellspring. ☉



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Swank girls

Riding crops, rubber corsets and platform shoes rule the roost at Seedy's

By PHIL DUPERRON

Swank: A Fashion and Art Show • Featuring work by Leik Industries and Marcy Nielson • Seedy's • Fri, Nov 7 Marcy Nielson's incredibly touchable sculptures turned Seedy's into a naughty petting zoo last Friday night. Like giant alien slugs made out of PVC, they crawled across the walls and floor, setting the mood for the evening. Without a runway, the women-modeling Leik Industries' latest batch of erotic wear circulated about the room, stopping every now and then to tweak the incredible creations. Their lithe frames were heightened by huge platform boots and mountainous hair until they towered over the crowd like gothic superheroes. Tight-fitting leather and rubber corsets along with texturized panties and skirts were the order of the day. Accessorized by riding crops and black, lacy parasols, the wild ensembles oozed a dark vampire chic. The alien art stays at Seedy's for a month but you'll have to go to Sanctuary to check out the clothes. ●



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DISH WEEKLY

PREVIOUSLY REVIEWED RESTAURANTS

LEGEND

Price per person, before tax and tip

\$	— Less than \$10
\$5	— \$10 to \$20
\$55	— \$20 to \$30
\$555	— \$30 and up

THE BLUE NILE ETHIOPIAN CUISINE

10875-98 St • 428-5139

As I walk up to the front door of the Blue Nile, I feel like I'm entering someone's home. Colourful flowers line the walkway and the tiny patio out front is like the stoop of a house. Blue Nile's menu has just 10 items (none of them costing more than over \$10) so it's easy to make a decision and feel good about it. I consider the doro wat, a traditional Ethiopian chicken stew, and the ritfo, very rare chopped beef with spiced butter, mitmita (a special red pepper sauce) and homemade cottage cheese, but the combo platter makes the most sense since it offers a wide assortment of dishes to explore. There's a beef dish (named either kay wat or alicha wat, and I'm afraid I'm not sure which), shiro wat (a ground pea mash with onions, tomatoes and green peppers), tikel gomen (cabbage, potato and carrots simmered in a mild sauce with ginger, garlic, onion and green pepper), yeabesha gomen (steamed spinach) and a small portion of the Blue Nile house salad. We also ordered some ye bag wat, lamb braised in the common red pepper sauce. Everything is placed in a mesob, a large woven basket that partitions all the items into small servings. The bottom of the mesob is lined with injera and the food is carefully placed atop it. Our server brings the lamb out in a separate bowl and spoons it into the centre of the basket, creating a layout that resembles an artist's palette. Just as colourful, too. The ye bag wat is especially tasty, with a fiery kick that doesn't overpower. We also really like the ground pea, which looks like a glob of yellow humus, and the steamed spinach, which reminds me of how my mother would cook greens like Swiss chard—it's

bitter but very tender and nicely complemented by the pieces of injera. Average Price: \$5 (Reviewed 09/25/03)

CHURROS KING

10152-82 Avenue • 989-1083

Veterans of the Old Strathcona food scene have probably been wondering just exactly what was going on with the Churros King, the tiny Latino grill on Whyte Ave just east of Calgary Trail. Well, a seemingly simple plan to renovate the restaurant turned into a nightmare that dragged out for months, with the place's doors closed all the while. "I thought it was a joke when Dad called and said we finally had the permit," says Volkhart Caro. The beautiful touches throughout the expanded space are plucked right from the family's roots in Chile—the stucco archways, the lattice board across the ceiling with plastic grapes hanging down, the homemade kites hanging near the cash counter and the terra cotta-coloured roof tiles. They've added some wicked stuff to the menu, too, like pescito frito (deep-fried sole) and the mack daddy of all meat dishes, the Parrillas King, a barbecue for two served on a hot grill right at your table, which would've been impossible in the old setup. It contains about a kilo of meat, including top sirloin beef, chorizo, chicken and pork, served with salad and sopaipillas, a Chilean bread for mopping up the goodies. Average price: \$ (Reviewed 04/03/03)

HIGH VOLTAGE FOOD AND COFFEE BAR

10387-63 Ave • 437-3202

It's off the beaten path in the sense that you might not think to stop there—seeing as you're likely driving past it in a car. But High Voltage is a gem, serving the best assortment of donairs you'll find on the south side. Traditional Greek, blue cheese, jerk—they're just some of the styles on the menu, in addition to a wide assortment of cold cut sandwiches, Greek specialties and vegetarian fare like spanakopita or falafel. The Chicago gyros is a must. If

you haven't eaten in a few days, order the high voltage size. Average Price: \$ (Reviewed 03/20/03)

KRUA WILAI

9940-106 Street • 424-8308

In the downtown eatery Krua Wilai, I got to sample some of the better Thai food in icy Alberta. It was authentic indeed, though somewhat toned down in the spice department. Unlike we North Americans, Thais consider eating a group activity. No à la carte ordering or spacing out of courses here—in Thailand, you put all the dishes on the table at once and everyone enjoys. Krua Wilai offered me a true taste of Thailand. Sweet, sour, hot; it was wild. Average Price: \$5 (Reviewed 01/23/03)

LEMONGRASS CAFÉ

10417-51 Ave • 413-0088

I was driving around aimlessly for a good hour, spotting nothing but "CLOSED" signs, before pulling up to the Lemongrass Café, a tasteful little Vietnamese place. Thankfully, it was open—the better half in the passenger seat gets awful grumpy when she's real hungry. We were seated in a deuce up against the camel-coloured walls and dove right into the menus. I considered choosing something from the interesting drink menu, be it a green tea-laced martini or a Nhau vo sake Caesar but we didn't have the time. Need food—now. Kate and I figured we'd pick one main dish each, while I made the executive decision to start with some spicy kimchee and a special Southwestern Vietnamese noodle soup. Our capable waiter laid down the dishes—a plate of lemongrass chicken and a neat-looking vegetarian option, tofu with mango and apple in a spicy red curry. Oh, and some perfectly cooked fluffy rice. The crispy pieces of chicken were topped with a sweet, lemony glaze. Nothing fancy, but it sure hit the spot. And I really loved the vegetarian dish. The tofu still had some texture to it despite swimming in the lovely, rich curry. It included a few different types of apple chunks, though I did-

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Bisque management

The Billingsgate Seafood Market and Lighthouse Café is a beacon for fish-lovers

By DAVID DICENZO

I wouldn't exactly call myself a regular at the Old Strathcona branch of the Billingsgate Seafood Market but I can say that when I want a fish dish to impress, I go there to shop. I've picked up some beautiful tuna before, some mussels and on a couple of occasions I've tried the catfish, doing it up with a little blackened action. (It never turns out as good as the po'boys at Da-De-O, but hey, I try.) Whenever I do visit, I peek at the back of the room to see what's going on in the **Lighthouse Café** portion of the building. Finally, I decided to grab some eats there myself.

The smell of sea-dwelling lifeforms fills the air, and the East Coast music in the background makes me feel as though I've been suddenly transported to the Rock. I'm searching for the words to describe the dining area, a compact section featuring numerous artistic depictions of fish and, unsurprisingly, lighthouses. Then it hits me: "rustic oceanic atmosphere."

Okay, so that's what it says on the menu. So sue me.

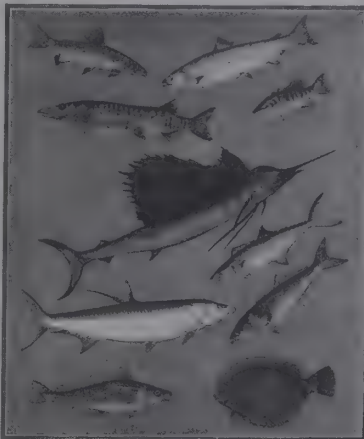
Speaking of menus, I'm loving the café's lunch edition. The level of sophistication is greater than I expected, what with the red Peruvian trout and Cajun prawn pizza. And the dinner menu is even more in-depth, featuring a list of dishes that makes my mouth water—paella, Hawaiian big-eye tuna, bouillabaisse and Califor-

nia striped bass with a mandarin fennel glaze. Very nice. Those enamoured by the classics will have to try the steak and whole lobster, a hearty surf and turf combo indeed. And the wine list seems reasonably priced, too—I see a bottle of Australian Rosemount shiraz-cabernet is \$23, and I know the same bottle will run you about \$16 or so in the liquor store, so Billingsgate isn't going

RESTAURANTS

crazy with the markup.

Being the soup junkie that I am, I start off with a small bowl of lobster bisque. The lovely orange mixture is described as having been prepared in the traditional French style, with cognac, cream and rich lobster broth. Topped with some



finely chopped fresh parsley, it's incredibly flavourful. Rich, yes, but it doesn't weigh me down at all—which is good because I have a pickarel fillet on the way. (Note: you can get a bigger portion of the bisque as

a meal. I saw one come out of the kitchen. Huge.)

"That's a good choice," the server tells me as I order the fish, prepared in a tangerine butter and served with green apple relish.

THE LARGE, colourful plate features the northern Alberta pickerel, a side of rice and a medley of vegetables. Not just your cheap, run-of-the-mill veggies either, but a mix of red pepper, snow peas, zucchini, cauliflower, broccoli, carrots and squash. The pickerel is good and tender, the white meat flaking apart as you gently prod it with the fork. I'm missing something, though. And unfortunately, it doesn't dawn on me until later that there was no green apple relish on the side. Damn. It would've tasted great with the pickerel... which is probably why it appears on the menu in the first place, right? Still, I douse the fish with some lemon and it's just fine.

The server asks me if I'm interested in any dessert and I'm tempted by the extensive variety of ice creams and homemade sweets... but not today. I have to run, wondering what could've been had my pickerel been reunited with its long-lost love, the relish that's eerily gone MIA.

As I make my way out of the restaurant I pass through the market. I stop and take a brief scan of the fish and seafood that's available. This might be something you'll want to check on the way in because the chef, Dennis Cummings, and his kitchen staff will prepare anything in stock for you, even if it

doesn't appear on the menu. Interesting touch. ☉

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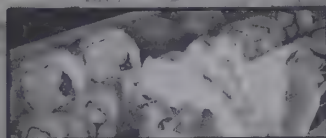
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DISH WEEKLY

n't find much mango in it—just a little bite every now and then. I'm assuming the sweetness of the fruit was designed to counteract the fire of the curry and it all worked wonderfully together. (It was just fantastic spooned over the rice.) Our dessert, chocolate and pecan spring rolls, arrived atop a white, shell-shaped plate with three balls of lichee, a small dollop of whipped cream with a mint leaf and a tiny bowl of ginger coconut caramel glaze for dipping. This was a small masterpiece. I'd never seen a dessert like it and the taste was incredible—rich chocolate, melded with the pecans and paper-thin layers of the crispy spring roll, still hot. **Average Price: \$5** (Reviewed 08/28/03)

LEVA

11053-86 Ave • 433-LEVA

As soon as I walk into Leva, my eyes lock on the impressive-looking Sicilian cannolis behind the counter—I haven't seen old-school pastries like that in a long, long time. I instantly decide that after a relaxing, late afternoon bite, I'll be trying one. The main menu items are things like homemade thin-crust pizzas and tramezzinis, which are grilled sandwiches. But I notice some unique items too, like the biscottis—lemon pistachio or anise-flavoured. Very cool. There's also a nice array of imported beers and Italian wines, like the Nipozzano Chianti, a fantastic choice I've enjoyed on a few occasions. I go with the chicken pesto tramezzini and ask for a side of green bean salad. Antonio, the guy who seems to run the joint, tells me they're out, so I go for the potato salad. He says I'll like it. The tramezzini is incredible and I'll tell you why: I've had the chicken and pesto combo at other places and usually it's chicken loaf that comes with it. Not at Leva. Real, tender chicken breast, sliced thinly, combined with a tasty pesto and cheese. (I believe Antonio said it was Edam.) And the perfectly spherical scoop of potato salad is excellent—Antonio has left the skin on the potatoes, which I like, and he's mixed in a few artichokes too. He's also finished it all off with a drizzle of olive oil and some grated cheese on top. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 10/02/03)

PAT 'N MIKE'S FAMILY RESTAURANT 17732-102 Ave (Westgate Business Park) • 484-7673

However long it's been since Pat 'n' Mike's got started, I figure not much has changed. And that's good. As I sit at the diner-style counter in my spacious, swiveling double seat, I gaze around the noisy room and find all sorts of cool stuff. There's a rack filled with those mini-boxes of cereal and nearby is a couple of pies awaiting their call to duty. I smile when I see the circular, revolving chit-holder that the open kitchen utilizes for new orders from the "veteran" waitstaff. And Mike himself is making the rounds, keeping an eye on things during the controlled chaos of the lunch rush. I decide on the cutlet sandwich with some fries and coleslaw on the side. Almost everything that I see coming out of the kitchen has gravy on it so I join in and get a scoop for the fries. Now, I'm not going to pretend that my sandwich is one of the best things I've ever ingested—it was zapped in the deep fryer just a little too long for my liking—but for \$5.75, I didn't really expect the world. I was eagerly anticipating the "special

sauce" but can't help but crack another smile when I find relish and mayo on my bun. The chunky slaw is pretty good, though. The two pies available for dessert are pineapple coconut cream and an apple crumble. I choose the latter, which costs me a mere toonie—half a buck more to have it à la mode. How sweet is that? The piece of apple crumble is huge, so I'm guessing Mike doesn't make all his profit from the pie counter. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 06/26/03)

PORTUGUESE CANADIAN BAKERY

5304-118 Ave • 413-4056

I knew I was onto something when the three glassy-eyed guys in front of me at the counter each ordered big Portuguese sandwiches. It sounded as if this were a routine for them. While I waited for the trio to get their order, I checked out the rest of this small bakery, a shop stocked with an assortment of homemade breads and pastries, frozen seafood, great European food items, dried herbs and a selection of impressive olive oils. There was also the deli counter, of course. Finally, it was my turn. When you order the Portuguese sandwich, you get your choice of two meats and one cheese. I chose the rosemary ham (sort of a poor man's prosciutto with rosemary caked around the outside), something called hot paio (similar to a hot capicollo) and some creamy havarti cheese. When my own giant sandwich was served, I immediately took notice of how it was arranged—bread, mayo, rosemary ham, cheese, lettuce, tomato, cheese, paio, mustard. I'm positive the preparer did this on purpose. Each bite wasn't just a mish-mash of layers in which each individual item got lost in the shuffle. Instead, the ham would sometimes hit my tastebuds first and give me a stronger hint of the rosemary. Sometimes, the paio made a stronger impact. It was interesting. I preferred the soft codfish ball to the shrimp version, which was more like a fried dumpling filled with a pink mixture, though both were tasty. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 04/10/03)

PUB 1905

10171 Saskatchewan Drive • 431-1717
There's definitely a sporting flavour in Pub 1905 (the old Ritchie Mill restaurant). Yeah, they still have the old stone walls, but it's amazing how a few strategically placed hockey jerseys can change a restaurant's theme. And the mood is further lightened by pictures of Canadian celebrities (Michael J. Fox, Leslie Nielsen, John Candy and even a print of Rush's Moving Pictures) strewn across the walls. They may have changed over to a pub theme, but the food has flair. Despite the changeover, there's still a special on mussels. Our big bowl, done in a tasty coconut curry cream sauce, was delicious. They were large, plump suckers and the half-price deal of just \$5 was certainly okay with the woman and me. We also tried the black tiger prawns in Cajun butter, an appetizer-sized spinach salad and something called a gourmet stuffer, a huge baked potato topped with your choice of special sauce. **Average price: \$** (Reviewed 04/10/03)

RED OX INN

9420-91 St • 465-5727

You either know the Red Ox or you don't—and from my understanding, if you're an Edmontonian with any genuine love for food, you're fully aware of this gem tucked away in the residential

south side neighbourhood near Gal-lagher Park. A superior food experience is sensual by its very nature and not only was my nose happy, but my eyes were likewise when my basil crusted lamb chops were delivered. After a good while, my plate was completely void of any food. (Had I been home, I would've licked it for sure.) We sipped some more of the luxurious wine and eventually ordered something sweet—blueberry and white chocolate bread pudding with a warm crème anglaise. The food, the atmosphere, the well-timed service... all of it inspires awe in me, but what I think best sums up a place like the Red Ox Inn is the incredible attention to detail, from the finely-crafted side dishes to the lovely prints on the orange-shaded walls. **Average Price: \$\$\$\$** (Reviewed 03/27/03)

RICKY'S ALL DAY GRILL

10140-109 St • 421-7546

Ricky's—a western Canadian chain with a ton of outlets throughout B.C., Alberta and (I believe) Saskatchewan—serves a bevy of diner staples like liver and onions, Salisbury steak, burgers and sandwiches, but there are almost two full pages of brekkie food on the menu as well, and the cool thing is it's all available any time of the day. It's definitely a boon to the hungry diner, even if it throws a mighty big wrench into the selection process. Coffee cups are already on the tables (turned upside-down no less), and the seating consists mostly of booths. You half-expect Linda Lavin to walk up to take your order, but the Ricky's inner belly is new and clean, not beat-up and dingy like Mel's. It's like a new pair of glimmering white kicks—you need to scuff them up a bit... you know, work 'em in. They even offer shakes, so I order a chocolate one, the first time I've done so in a restaurant in years and years. The triple chorizo Benny was absolutely gargantuan, with three eggs and a mountain of home fries piled onto an extra-large red plate (heated, good for keeping the breakfast contents warm). **Average Price: \$5** (Reviewed 05/29/03)

SCHANKS ATHLETIC CLUB

9927-178 St • 444-2125

"The thing I love about Schanks," my friend Steve says, "is that other than the track, there's not a bigger cavalcade of problem gamblers anywhere." How prophetic. Just as we sit down in front of one of the many massive TV screens with the game on (they have the sound up for the NFL tilt as opposed to the CFL playoff game, which in a way is too bad), I can't help but notice the freakshow going on one table over. The guy in question is wearing a leather tricoloured Miami Dolphins hat, his dirty jeans are wide open and his ample gut is hanging out, and in between nervously sipping coffee, hauling on cigarettes and choosing plays on his QB1 machine, he appears to be rubbing himself down, head included, with a bottle of Absorbine Jr. But I'm more chuffed about the meager order of hot, boneless wings that we start out with. Nine bucks and there's nothing more than a handful of overdone, deep-fried chicken chunks with some hot sauce and a side of ranch. Luckily, one my superstars has already scored a touchdown so I'm in a good mood, just like the hardcore Canadian fans celebrating Saskatchewan's route of Winnipeg. The quality slightly improves with the next round of eats. I go with the peppercom jack burger, while Steve tries the spolumbo submarine sandwich. I haven't had a

VUEWEEKLY'S HOTEL GUIDE

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DISH WEEKLY

burger in a while, so it's a treat to sink into the big patty, which was seasoned with—get this—"course" pepper and a Jack Daniels barbecue sauce. I wonder for a second if the typo was on purpose. Nah. My mixed greens on the side have about as much spring as the Blue Bombers offence, but the crispy order of kettle chips makes up for it. The home-made chips are nice and hot, served with a bowl of a real spicy onion, cream cheese dip. It's definitely the "play of the day" in this highlight package. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 11/06/03)

TERRY VAUGHN'S SPORTS LOUNGE

1036-100 St (The MacLeod) • 428-3399
If you know anything about stalwart Eskimo wide receiver Terry Vaughn, then you know he's a class act who always looks good on the football field. It's no surprise, then, that the establishment that bears his name should have the same characteristics. The space is big (okay, that's where the similarity to TV ends) and bold, with stained-wood chairs/accents, a beautiful long bar, comfy leather couches and a super-high ceiling left over from the bank that was housed in the space some 20 years ago. I'm starving when we walk through the door and in time, a healthy serving (in quantity, not cholesterol) of hickory smoked chicken dip is placed in front of us. The rich portion of dip—a tasty combo of jack cheese and tender chunks of chicken topped with melted cheddar—is pretty rare. Served with fresh tricoloured corn chips and salsa, it's a great starter. I know it will fill us up but I can't stop dunking the chips until every last bit of the concoction is scraped from the sides of the bowl.

We split a house salad, a standard mix of greens and veggies, but the tangy mango vinaigrette we chose sets it apart from similar items on most menus. Even though the dip has bird in it, the slow-roasted jerk chicken with rice and beans jumps off the page at me. One problem: no beans in the rice. Oh well. The chicken is incredibly tender and man, the jerk coating hits me harder than Terry's teammate Singor Mobley in the open field. This was serious heat. I really like the dish, but for a few shaky moments, I feel like I'm in a sauna. Our server, a friendly lass from Nova Scotia, recommends the cheesecake for dessert and we like the sound of a strawberry and chocolate combo for topping. Really good stuff and nicely presented, with a few fresh mint leaves on the side. We're filled up big time by this point and ready to get outta Dodge. The tab comes and I'm fairly impressed that we've only racked up a bill of about \$60, despite what seemed like a substantial amount of food and drink. **Average price: \$\$\$** (Reviewed 08/14/03)

THREE MUSKETEERS FRENCH CREPES

10416-82 Ave • 437-4239
"The cuisine of cowardice," remarks Steve as we walk in to grab a bite. "I wonder what they'd say if I asked for freedom fries?" In fact, we order a couple of Fin du Monde beers (from Quebec) and scan through the brunch menu. I quickly fall in love with this brew, which is murky and looks like a frothy mango juice but boasts a great sweet taste—amazing considering that it's nine per cent alcohol. Exceptional flavour and a high alcohol content—that's a dangerous mix on a sunny day. After a scan of the menu, Steve makes his decision. "I don't know what it is," he says, "but I'm getting the gallette Canadienne." Myself, I can't stray away from the eggs Benedict, especially when the Hollandaise sauce is homemade, unlike the handy Knorr packets I use in my own kitchen. Steve's gallette is a whole-wheat crepe stuffed with smoked salmon, sour cream and capers and topped with a pink seafood purée. He takes care of the entire thing so I'm guessing it's good. My eggs Benny are sensational. I'm certainly pleased with the buttery Hollandaise, but the thick, juicy back bacon makes the dish even better. The home fries could've been a little crispier, but still, it's the best Benedict I've had, which is saying a lot. I've tried many. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 04/24/03)

TOKYO EXPRESS

Various locations

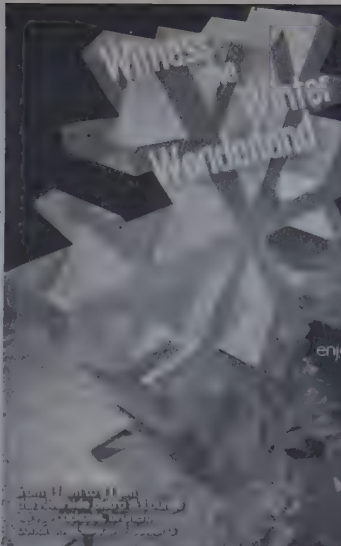
Edmontonian Cathy Luke digs her sushi. The only problem is that her busy lifestyle made it difficult to make regular stops at all her favourite local haunts. What she (and people like her) needed was a quick answer to that craving—so she opened up Tokyo Express. How's that for problem-solving? The Hong Kong-born Luke, along with her sushi chef brothers Steve and William, debuted Tokyo Express five years ago at WEM and now the family owns seven River City locations, including the groundbreaking drive-thru down on 23rd Ave, a first in the Great White North. "I am a sushi lover," Luke says. "I thought that there should be a place where you can grab it quick, with good quality and reasonable prices. 'That's how we started.' Well, I've now run the gamut at Tokyo Express. In four days, I made three visits to two different locations, sampling a wide selection of what the homegrown chain had to offer. My stomach was rumbling by about noon so I went to one of their two mall locations to enjoy a massive rice bowl—the teriyaki chicken, to be exact. For \$4.95, you get a hearty dish loaded with rice, julienned carrots, cucumbers and a breaded piece of chicken, slathered in the teriyaki and topped with sesame seeds. On Saturday, we ordered the udon noodle soup, a single dynamite roll and rainbow rolls. Oh, and green

tea. The udon was wicked, a generous helping of broth loaded with the thick four-sided noodles, crab, a breaded pork cutlet, sweet tofu, fish cake slices, green onion and a big, deep-fried shrimp. Monday, I tried the assorted sushi combo and took advantage of the add-on, \$1.99 for miso soup and green tea ice cream. So there you go—three trips in four days, at a total cost of about \$30. Try and scout out four decent, healthy meals for that much dough. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 05/01/03)

TROPİKA MALAYSIAN CUISINE

6004-104 St • 439-6699

As we meet up in the front entrance of Tropika and I'm amazed by how packed it is this jumping Friday night. I've been here before and I loved it, but that visit was quite some time ago. Years, in fact, and it seems Tropika's gotten a lot more popular since then. And why not? With the straw awning over the bar, the big woven chairs reserved for VIPs and the Hawaiian shirts on the waitstaff, it's like island party central in here. Before we even look at the tantalizing food menu, we giggle at the depth and variety of the drink list. Doctor Funk (and Doctor Funk's Sun, made with 151 rum), Bellini, Scorpion—they all look good. Birthday boy John finds his groove when he orders a Tropicolada, a drink that apparently comes from heaven. "You couldn't come up with anything that would make me happier," John says after slurping up the last bit of what one table member calls "an Orange Julius with alcohol." I figure food will make us even happier. Right out of the gate, we try some starters: a dozen satays (pork, beef, chicken and lamb), five Indonesian spring rolls and two bowls of Singapore Laska, a hearty soup with vermicelli noodles. The crunchy peanut sauce goes well with the satays and the spring rolls are incredibly neat, stuffed with pan-fried pork, Chinese mushrooms and shredded jicama, then deep-fried extra-crispy with peanuts on the outer shell. The Singapore Laska is a feast with shrimp, tofu and fish cakes all married together in a tasty broth. My favourite, however, is the Kari Lembu, a sensational dish of melt-in-your-mouth curry with beef. We also ordered something known as Nasi Goreng, a local recipe of Malay fried rice and a few delectable side dishes, including steamed spinach and Sambal Bunchies, firm green beans with prawns and Sambal sauce. While each of these creations rocks (very spicy stuff), the most memorable item is the Sayur Lemak hot pot, which comes to the table in a small kettle filled with vegetables and prawns simmered in a Malay coconut sauce. Oh, it was awesome, the broth so rich and colourful—by far the pièce de résistance. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 10/09/03)



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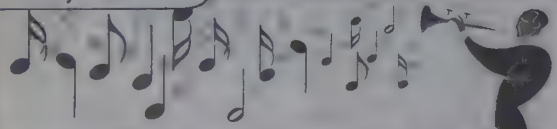


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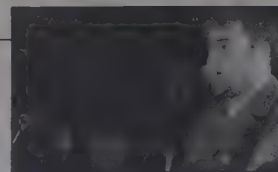


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alumni, and their guests. All shows are for minors unless otherwise stated.

MUSIC • this week

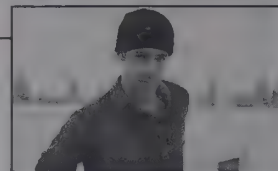
thursday

Wacky musician **Spokey Ruben** returns to Edmonton, dropping into the Sidetrack Café in support of his new album, *Alone at the Zoo*. Special signed editions will be available only at the show, so be sure to grab one. Local bands This Civil Twilight and AA Sound System will start things off. Otherwise, if you fancy some swank house action, check out Mark Farina at the Joint, with Halo resident Junior Brown warming up the decks.



friday

The bizarre antics of Canada's most unusual fiddler **Ashley MacIsaac** may have been a headache to many record company suits, but you can't deny that the Cape Breton native is a brilliant player. He recently documented his life in the autobiography *Fiddling With Disaster*, and you can hear what's been up to when he plays at the Sidetrack Café. Tickets are \$12 in advance, available at Ticketmaster, Blackbyrd and the Track.



saturday

The Sidetrack is booming these days, eh? Tonight, guitar slinger **Bobby Cameron** celebrates the release of his new album, *Emotional Drift*, with Painting Daisy Rachelle Van Zanten starting things off. Tickets \$8 in advance at the Track. Out at St. Albert's Arden Theatre, boogie-woogie piano player Michael Kaeshammer will be tickling the ivories, with tickets pegged at \$25, available at the box office.



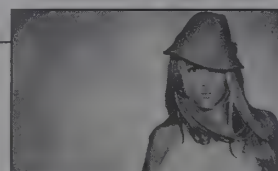
sunday

Raging hormones, flowing booze and fire-breathing rock 'n' roll? That can only mean that **Nashville Pussy** is back in town! The big show is happening down at New City, with Peter Pan Speedrock and the raunchy hip hop of Stinkmitt getting everything revved up for ya. Tickets are \$15 advance, available at TIX on the Square, Blackbyrd, Listen, Freecloud and New City.



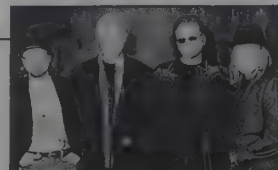
monday

Make room on the CD shelf tonight, because tomorrow you might want to pick up some new records! Among the noteworthy: The Beatles, *Let It Be... Naked* (Capitol/EMI); Blink-182, *Blink-182* (Geffen); Jay Z, *The Black Album* (Def Jam); Soundgarden, *Anthology* (A&M); Underworld, *Anthology* (V2); and live concert DVDs from U2 and Red Hot Chili Peppers. Oh yeah, and **Britney Spears**, *In the Zone* (Jive).



tuesday

Fancy some straight-ahead roots in the vein of John Hiatt and Lyle Lovett? Then you'll want to kick back at the Sidetrack Café for **The Legendary Trucks**, featuring one of the best pedal steel players around, Dave Martineau. And they're from Edmonton! It's roots music at its finest. The Dustkickers will start the ball rolling tonight.



wednesday

Local post-rock group **The Faunts** bring their absorbing sonic avalanche to the New City stage, hot off a series of gigs across the country. Seek out their superb disc *High Expectations/Low Results*, available at your favourite local indie record shop. The equally compelling Reverie Sound Revue will set the stage for the night.



newswire

Holy merger mania! **Sony** is looking at absorbing **BMG's** music catalogue, while **Universal Music Group** has worked out a deal to take over **Dreamworks Records**.... That talent show on acid, **American Idol**, will now become a videogame on the Playstation 2 platform, featuring interactive criticism from judges Simon Cowell, Paula Abdul and Randy Jackson.... Indie pop-punks **Not By Choice** are the latest signing for MapleMusic, home to the Dears, Pilate and Kathleen Edwards.... The corner of Second Street and the Bovey in New York City will be named after the late **Joey Ramone**.... The **Music Industry Online Auction**, a 24-hour-long fundraiser for the Canadian Music Therapy Trust Fund, will hit eBay on November 26, offering Canadian music fans a chance at some exclusive swag.... British scalawags **Oasis** are finally heading back into the studio to record a new album, according to **NME**.... Also in the studio are Montreal pop-punks **Simple Plan**, who are releasing a DVD documenting their ascent into stardom, entitled *A Small Package for You*.

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MUSIC



music notes

By PHIL DUPERRON AND JERED STUFFCO

Brand new keys

All Purpose Voltage Heroes • With the Unicorns • Stars • Thu, Nov 13 It used to be that teenagers who dug music only wanted to play guitar. But according to Kevin Cherney, one of two keyboardists in local synth-rock outfit All Purpose Voltage Heroes, times have changed. "I play guitar too," he says, "but keyboards were just an easy thing to pick up. If

you pick up a guitar and you don't know how to play, it can seem a lot harder. With keyboards, it's pretty easy to tell what sounds good."

With bands like Hot Hot Heat employing keyboards onstage and synth-driven bands like the Cure enjoying a comeback recently, it's no wonder some of the kids have decided to ditch the axes altogether. In fact, APVH (which is rounded out by vocalist Dan Poole, his brother Zack Poole on keyboards and drummer Connor Mayer) don't even have a bassist. "I think it's good for music," Cherney says. "It adds another level than just the standard bass, drums and guitar. You can do so much more with keyboards."

Though Cherney and his pals, whose ages range from 16 to 19, don't have any formal training on the ivories, he says it's all part of the band's approach. "It's total garage sale, flea market keyboards," he laughs. "We have this one keyboard that's a Realistic—it only has three

octaves and it's missing seven keys." • Earlier this year, the band captured their ragtag approach to music on tape, and their home-recorded, 13-track debut *Decorate Your Monster Shirt* has caused a minor stir among E-ville's indie intelligentsia. "We're pulling from a lot of different genres," Cherney says. "There aren't a lot of bands doing what we are right now."

Even though APVH's lineup is still young enough to be the offspring of most other local bands, Cherney claims they've yet to be confronted with ageism. "I don't think it's too bad," he says. "I think we seem older than we are. If we were a bunch of immature kids running around acting like idiots, maybe we would." (JS)

Miss information

Near Miss • With Deville and Change Methodical • Stars • Sat, Nov 15 Quebec native Max Bechard has been living the punk rock dream.

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FRI NOV. 14

Seedy's

Samsara

knee deep in grass

Thursday November 13th

When he was just 19, he left Canada for New Jersey to play bass for Big Wig and toured with punk heavyweights like the Vandals. But after a couple years, he left Big Wig and struck out on his own with bandmate Jeremy Hernandez, whom he'd been writing songs with. They moved south to Austin, Texas, where Hernandez met his girlfriend. Oh, and they also formed Near Miss with Bechard on drums and Hernandez taking up vocal duties.

Only four short months after getting together with bassist Mychael Bingham and guitarist Sean Cockrell, Near Miss put out *The Fine Art of Making Enemies* on Fearless Records back in July of 2002. Their bouncy punk anthems were well-received by critics and fans, but the band was still in its infancy when they went into the studio—and a lot has changed since it came out.

"We're not gonna go back on tour until we have another album written and at least demoed," Bechard says over the phone from Boise, Idaho. "When we wrote the first record, it was pretty much me and Jeremy and we wrote half of it when we were still in Big Wig. Now we know each other a little better and we know how everybody plays in the band, so we can write more as a band instead. So it'll all be a little more fun. Most of [the new songs] are pretty much there, but we still have to work little parts and make sure that everything is as good as it can get, y'know what I mean? That's the thing—with the first record, we totally rushed into it. So we do not want to rush into this record. We'll take six months to write it if we have to, just to make sure that every note is in the right place, where it absolutely needs to be."

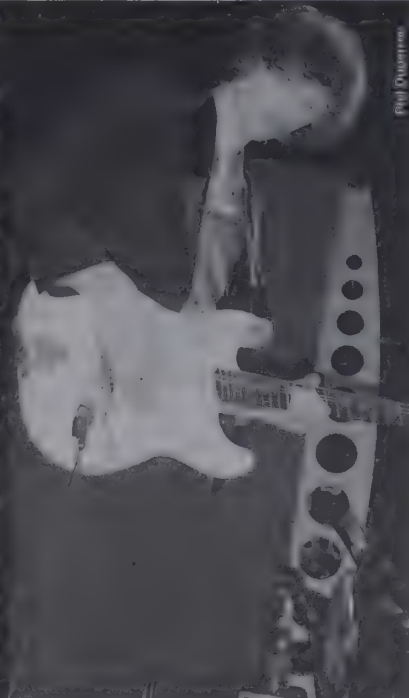
Not only has Bechard's northern upbringing prepared him for the travails of touring Canada in winter, but it also helps smooth the process of getting across the border. "They can't really refuse me access to my own country," he says. "The rest of the band doesn't really have problems—nobody has criminal records. They usually don't give us any problems. The trick with the border is, you got to look them straight in the eye. You only answer yes and no and you don't tell them anything they don't want to hear." (PD)

Music to shake your butt to

Ashtray Boy • With the Filmstills and Champion, Alberta • Seedy's • Sat, Nov 15 Call it a Commonwealth connection, an act of Anglo solidarity or simply a case of cross-cultural exchange, but it seems Australians and Canadians have a lot more in common than just language and a shared colonial background. Take Randall Lee, frontman with indie popsters Ashtray Boy as a prime example. Lee, who relocated to Vancouver earlier this year to take a job as an oceanographer, has hooked up with several local musicians to form the Canadian incarnation of Ashtray Boy.

While Australian cities like Melbourne and Adelaide are known around the world for their arts and music communities, Lee says Vancouver is a great place to be. "Vancouver is a good city because it's relatively dense," he says. "The city where I live in Australia [Sydney]

The Joel Plaskett Emergency • With Whitey Houston • New City • Fri, Nov 7 I don't know what a Thrush Hermit is, exactly, but after seeing the Joel Plaskett Emergency, I want to find out. With a sly smile on his face and a guitar in his hand, Plaskett proves once again what a powerful tool simplicity can be. His straightforward, three-chord rock stomps the shit out of any major labels have been overproducing for years. He may not have the overt sexual energy of Danko Jones or Hawkley Workman, but this Maritime's got cool in spades. I'm hesitant to listen to Plaskett's new CD *Truthfully Truthfully* in case it doesn't stand up to his amazing live show, but I'm willing to take the risk. (PD)



ney] is really spread out and no one really ventures into other areas."

Lee is as good a judge of a city's scene as anyone; he's also lived in Seattle and Chicago and has toured extensively all over the world since forming Ashtray Boy back in the mid-'90s. "Sydney is known as the Tribute Band Capital of the World," he says. "The live music scene has kind of died there. The Olympics didn't help—so many people came to the city and simply wanted entertainment—and gambling has pushed a lot of music out of the bars and clubs. Melbourne was really good, but it's kind of a boom-and-bust thing. It's like Seattle was—so many people moved there that the scene kind of fell in on itself."

However, Lee is quick to add that it's not all doom and gloom for the indie scene Down Under. "A lot of people are sort of doing it themselves now," he says. "Some people are putting on bands in their backyards as a way of finding a venue, because with all the bylaws, doing a show in a club can get really expensive." Luckily for Edmontonians, we'll be able to catch the band indoors. (JS)

Don't argue with the Reverie

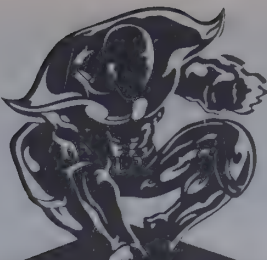
Reverie Sound Revue • With the Faunts • New City • Wed, Nov 19 Calgary's Reverie Sound Revue is an anomaly. At first they seem to play the kind of danceable, jazzy pop music so familiar to mall-walkers and radio listeners that it almost disappears into the background. But Lisa Lobsinger's ethereal voice lifts it far above the mediocre, lending their material a depth beyond that of most radio fodder. Not even guitarist/keyboardist Patrick Walls can put his finger on their sound; he says it just arose naturally when the five-piece formed in January of 2002.

"The reason why we're doing what we're doing is we didn't set out a goal

to begin with," he explains. "Y'know, we just met some people that we really wanted to play with and we all had fairly different backgrounds, from pure jazz to pop music to a lot harder stuff as well. It's just kind of evolved into what we all thought sounded good." The Revue recorded their first demo on an eight-track for pocket change and were amazed when people started grabbing them up. Then this summer, with the aid of a FACTOR grant, they recorded their self-titled debut with Dave Alcock at Sundae Sound.

"We tried to just go all-out with all the resources that we had," Walls says. "Keyboards and drum machines—y'know, as many layered tracks as we could. The biggest difference is just the quality of the recording. This time, we went into a real studio, with a real engineer and producer, to do the whole thing. We wanted something that really represented what we could actually play. The only thing is we wish we had a little bit more money so we could have made a full-length. We're still a small indie band so we really couldn't afford it."

Because Reverie Sound Revue don't readily fit into any genre and so far haven't gained mainstream pop success, they're used to playing with all sorts of bands in the underground—they even opened once for No Means No. But when they went out on tour for the first time this fall, they tested their flexibility and persevered. "We were thrown onto every kind of bill you could possibly imagine," Walls says. "With independent music, most of the underground scene is punk or hardcore or something like that. So when you get put on a bill with local acts it's usually that kind of genre. But the thing is, we usually fit in. They still enjoy it. They're not stuck in their own little musical genres; they just like people who can play music well." (PD)



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SHERLOCK HOLMES (CAPILANO) Neil McDonald

SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Dave Hiebert

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Tony Dizon

SIDETRACK CAFE Spooky Ruben, This Civil Twilight, AA Sound System, 9pm, \$8

SKYREACH CENTRE Bryan Adams, Colin James; 6:30pm (door), 7:30pm (show); \$29.50 and \$45.50; tickets available at TicketMaster

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YOUTH APARTMENT Thursday Night Shake Down: Motown, northern soul, funk, '60s pop with DJs Trayvid and Alex Zwoil

CLASSICAL

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THE JOINT Air Farina Tour: house with Mark Farina (San Francisco), Junior Brown; \$15 (adv)/\$20 (door); tickets available at TicketMaster

LONGRIDERS Hot Latin Nights: free dance lessons 8-9:30pm

MANHATTAN CLUB Freestyle Thursdays: house/trance with DJ MD and guests

NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE Rub-A-Dub Thursday: rock-steady, dub reggae with DJ Jesus and the Operation Redication Sound System

NEW CITY SUBURBS Progress: electro/new wave with DJ Miss Mannered and guests

THE ROOST Rotating shows: Ladonna's Review, Sticky's open stage and the Weakest Link game with DJ Jazzy (second and last Thursday \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member)

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YOUTH APARTMENT Thursday Night Shake Down: Motown, northern soul, funk, '60s pop with DJs Trayvid and Alex Zwoil

with Transient, Josh LP

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LA P'TITE SCENE Every Fri: open stage; 8pm-3am

RED'S Portal, Fade Blue Afterglow; \$4 (after 8pm)

SEEDY'S Road to Nowhere, Dudley Dawson

SHERLOCK HOLMES (CAPILANO) Neil McDonald

SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Dave Hiebert

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Tony Dizon

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SHERWOOD PARK ALLIANCE CHURCH Thousand Foot Knutch (CD release tour), RFK, Fat Static, Hawk Nelson, Kiro; 7pm (door), 7:30pm (music); \$10 (group)/\$12 (adv)/\$16 (door); tickets available at TicketMaster

SIDETRACK CAFE Ashley MacIsaac, Dustin Cole; \$15/\$12 (adv); tickets available at TicketMaster, Blackbird, Sidetrack

STUDIO 27 Sounds from the Spirit - World Music Sampler presented by the University of Alberta Center for Ethnomusicology; 2-4pm; free

UNCLE GLENN'S The Acoustics; 9:30pm-1:30am; no cover

URBAN LOUNGE FBI, \$5

WINDSOR BAR AND GRILL The Grassroot Deviation (roots, rock, funk, jam); no cover

WOODCROFT COMMUNITY HALL Steve Palmer (CD release celebration and dance) presented by the Uptown Folk Club; 7:30pm (door), 8pm (concert); \$10; tickets available by phone at TIX on the Square

YARBIRD SUITE Julie Mahendran; 8pm (door), 9pm (show); \$7 (member)/\$11 (guest); tickets available at TicketMaster

ZENARI'S ON 1ST Don Berner Tiro

A STARS Main Room: Star Lite Sly, Coalence, Cassidy, Today and After

BLUES ON WHYTE Donald Ray Johnson; no cover

CAPITOL HILL PUB Jerry Jerry and the Sons of Rhythm Orchestra

CASINO (EDMONTON) Headlines (pop/rock) PIANO BAR: Every Fri: Jo Ann Paul; 5:30pm-8pm

CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) Rule of Nines (pop/rock)

DUSTER'S PUB Big Jim Trio; 8pm; no cover

FESTIVAL PLACE Stewart MacDougall (CD release); 7:30pm, \$21 (cabaret)/\$19 (theatre seating); tickets available at Festival Place box office, TicketMaster

HOUSE ROOMS (DOWNTOWN) Blake Kinley

HUDSONS TAP HOUSE Darrell Barr

I.J.'S No Angels (rock)

KICK START CAFE Pocket Universe; 8pm

KINGSNIGHT PUB Ten Inch

L.B.'S PUB Whiskey Junction

LIONS HEAD Doug Stroud

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SAVOY Funk w/Bob Trampoline and Ben

SEEDY'S Ashtray Boy, the Filmstills, Champion, Alberta, \$8/\$6 (with can of food for the Food Bank)

SHERLOCK HOLMES (CAPILANO) Neil McDonald

SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Dave Hiebert

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Tony Dizon

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WHYTE) Duff Robison

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SIDETRACK CAFE Ashley MacIsaac, Dustin Cole; \$15/\$12 (adv); tickets available at TicketMaster, Blackbird, Sidetrack

STUDIO 27 Sounds from the Spirit - World Music Sampler presented by the University of Alberta Center for Ethnomusicology; 2-4pm; free

UNCLE GLENN'S The Acoustics; 9:3

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB Animal: dance with DJ Arrowchaser

CALIENTE NIGHTCLUB Community: house/techno with DJ Nightcrawler, guests

CRISTAL LOUNGE Urban with Invinible and guests

FILTHY MCNASTY'S Shake Yo' Ass: with DJ D-Lusion

HALO House with Junior Brown, Remo

MANHATTAN CLUB Sinful Saturdays: top 40/dance

NEW CITY SUBURBS Saturdays 5-10 P.M.: punk/alt/pop/dance with Blue Jay and Nikofeelya

THE ROOST Upstairs: Monthly theme parties with DJ Jazzy, New music with DJ Dan and Mike, Downstairs: Retro music; \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member)

ROXY ON WHYTE Session Saturday: dance/R&B, hip hop with DJ Extreme

RUBY SKYE BAR LOUNGE Nite at the Style: R&B/hip hop with People's DJ

SAVOY Deep house with Winston Roberts

SEXY NIGHTCLUB Main Floor: Heavy Metal Saturdays: with Brian

STONEHOUSE PUB Top 40 with DJ Clay

TONIC AFTER DARK Uncensored Saturdays: R&B, hip hop, Old School Sound Crew

TWILIGHT AFTERHOURS House/trance with Jeff Hills, DJ Trav, Crunchie, DJ Danae and guests; 18+; 2am-10am

WINDSOR BAR AND GRILL Sonic Eclipse: house/techno/trance/drum 'n' bass with Calabrea, Lowtel, Dreadnought, MC Simeon, MC Dnsw, guests

Y AFTERHOURS Charlie Mayhem, Donovan, Jucy, Anthony Donohue, Saint Luke

YOUR APARTMENT Nordic Foundations: DJ Dennis Zaz and Rackman Powers

SUN

LIVE MUSIC

CAPITOL HILL PUB Every Sun: open stage

ECCO BAR Every Sun: Burgess, Brokop and Girard; 5-9pm

NEW CITY LIKVID LOUNGE Nashville Pussy, Peter Pan Speedrock, Stinkmitt; \$15 (adv)/\$20 (door); tickets available at TIX on the Square, Blackbird, Listen, Freecloud, New City

O'BYRNE'S Every Sun: Joe Bird's line jam; 9:30pm

SECOND CUP MEADOWLARK Pocket Universe; all ages; 7pm

SIDETRACK CAFÉ Cruth-X, DJ Dudeman (rock); 9pm; \$6

CLASSICAL

CONVOCATION HALL Faculty and Friends Concert Series Patricia Tao (piano); 8pm; \$15 (adult)/\$10 (student/senior); tickets available at TIX on the Square

KHAZANA Opera Nuova Dinner Cabaret Series

WINSPEAR CENTRE Sundays at Three Concert Series presents *Let's Light* featuring Iveta Apolina (Davis organ); 3pm; \$19 (adv)/\$20; tickets available at TIX on the Square, Winspear box office

DJS

MANHATTAN CLUB Industry Sundays: top 40, dance/R&B

NEW CITY LIKVID LOUNGE Atmosphere: funk, rare groove, hip hop with DJ Cool Curt

THE ROOST Betty Ford Hangover Clinic Show Beer Bath: every long weekend with DJ Jazzy; \$2

SAVOY French Pop: mixed with Deja DJ

MON

LIVE MUSIC

BLUES ON WHYTE Warehouse (blues, R&B); no cover

GRINDER Every Mon: Open stage/acoustic jam hosted by the Bartman; 8pm

L.B.'S PUB Every Mon: open stage with Randy Martin; 9pm-2am

LIONS HEAD Ron Pederson

O'BYRNE'S Every Mon: The Fabulous Suchy Sisters; 9:30pm

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Richard Blaze

SIDETRACK CAFÉ Every Mon: open stage with Ben Spencer; no cover

DJS

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Indie rock with Penny and the Jets

FILTHY MCNASTY'S Metal Mondays: with DJ S.W.A.G.

TUE

LIVE MUSIC

BLUES ON WHYTE Warehouse (blues, R&B); no cover

DRUID Every Tue: open stage with Chris Wynters

LIONS HEAD Ron Pederson

O'BYRNE'S Every Tue: Celtic night with Shannon Johnson and friends; 9:30pm

SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Tim Becker

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Richard Blaze

SIDETRACK CAFÉ The Trucks and the Dustyclickers (rock); 9pm; \$5

YARDBIRD SUITE Tuesday Jam Session: hosted by Jeff Hendrick; 8pm (door), 9pm

CLASSICAL

ALL SAINTS' ANGLICAN CATHEDRAL Jeremy Spurgeon, Sylvia Shadick-Taylor (piano); (7:30pm), \$10 (adult)/\$5 (student/senior); tickets available at TIX on the Square

DJS

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE Karaoke and DJ Tues with Ron Rot Professional Music Productions

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Digital Underdog

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB Top 40 with DJ Stephan

CALIENTE NIGHTCLUB Bashment Tuesdays: hip hop/R&B/reggae/dancehall with Bomb Squad, DJ Invinible, Q B

DUSTER'S PUB DJ "Name a Tune" Dan

FILTHY MCNASTY'S Twisted Trivia: with DJ Whit-Ford

NEW CITY LIKVID LOUNGE Stupid Music for Stupid People for Stupid Cheap: punk rock bingo, rock

NEW CITY SUBURBS Resurrection: Industrial/EBM/electro/goth with Nik Rofeelya

THE ROOST Hot Butt Contest with DJ Janny, 8-midnight; \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member)

SEEDY'S Electro-trash, electro/punk funk with DJ Miss Mannered

WED

A STARS Main Room: Tuffhouse: Remo and Mr. O'

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GRILL Every Wed: open mic hosted by Dan Holden; 8:30pm

BLUES ON WHYTE Warehouse (blues, R&B); no cover

HUDSONS TAP HOUSE Tony Ozon

INDIE ROCK Night, indie rock with DJ ShouldbenaBand

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LIONS HEAD Ron Pederson

NEW CITY LIKVID LOUNGE Faunts, Reverse Sound Revolt

O'BYRNE'S Every Wed: Chris Wynters and friends; 9:30pm

PLEASANTVIEW HALL Every Wed: Northern Bluegrass Circle Music Society bluegrass jam; 7:30pm

ROSSDALE COMMUNITY HALL Every Wed: Little Flower open stage hosted by Brian Gregg; 8pm

SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Tim Becker

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Richard Blaze

SIDETRACK CAFÉ The Afterbeat, Mgrty Fight; 9pm, \$8

URBAN LOUNGE Groove Galaxy; \$5

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Wanna come to MY house after class?

\$3 Kokanee Pints Tuesdays 2-for-1 Menu & Karaoke Sundays

CAPILANO

NOV 13-15: NIEL McDONALD
NOV 20-22: LYLE HOBBS

WEST MALL

NOV 13-15: TONY DIZON
NOV 17-22: RICHARD BLAZE

DOWNTOWN

NOV 13-15: DAVE HERRERT
NOV 19-22: TIM BECKER

WHYTE AVE

NOV 14-15: DUFF ROBINSON
NOV 21-22: ROOM ROOM KINGS

Home.

www.thesherlockholmes.com

VENUE GUIDE

- A STARS** Upper Pl, 10545-82 Ave, 439-1422
- ALL SAINTS' ANGLICAN CATHEDRAL** 10035-103 St, 421-1263/420-1757
- ARDEN** 5 St, Anne Street, St. Albert, 459-1542/450-8000
- THE ARMOURY** 10310-85 Ave, 702-1800
- ATLANTIC TRAP AND GRILL** 7704-104 St, 432-4611
- BACKROOM VODKA BAR** 10324-82 Ave, upstairs, 436-4418
- BEULAH ALLIANCE CHURCH** 17504-98A Ave, 486-4010
- BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE** Continental Inn, 16625 Stony Plain Road, 484-7751
- BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE** 10425-82 Ave, 439-1082
- BLUES ON WHYTE** 10329-82 Ave, 439-5058
- BOOTS** 10242-106 St, 423-5014
- BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB** 11725B Jasper Ave, 488-6636
- CALIENTE NIGHTCLUB** 10315 Jasper Ave, 425-0850
- CAPITOL HILL PUB** 14203 Stony Plain Rd, 454-3063
- CASINO (EDMONTON)** 7055 Argyle Rd, 463-9467
- CASINO (YELLOWHEAD)**
- 12464-153 St, 463-9467
- CONVOCATION HALL** U of A Campus, 492-0601/420-1757
- COWBOYS** 10102-180 St, 481-8739
- CRISTAL LOUNGE** 10336 Jasper Ave, 426-7521
- DECADENCE NIGHTCLUB** 10018-105 St (upstairs), 990-1792
- DEWEY'S** Power Plant, U of A Campus, 492-3101
- DONNA** 10177-99 St, 429-3338
- DRUID** 11606 Jasper Ave, 454-9928
- DUSTY'S PUB** 6402-118 Ave, 474-5554
- EVERYTHING CATHY AND SAKS BAR** 11248-104 Ave, 428-2448
- ECCO BAR** 9605-66 Ave, 435-5050
- ELPHANT AND CASTLE ON WHYTE** 10314-82 Ave, 439-4545
- FESTIVAL PLACE** 100 Festival Way, Sherwood Park, 464-2852
- FILTHY MCNASTY'S PUB** 10511-82 Ave, 432-5224
- FOUR ROOMS RESTAURANT (EDMONTON)** Edmonton Centre, 102 Ave, Entrance, 426-4767
- GRINDER** 10957-124 St, 453-1709
- 12464-153 St, 463-9467
- 4926-98 Ave, 440-2233
- HORIZON STAGE** 1001 Calahoe Rd, Spruce Grove, 962-8995/451-8000
- HUDSONS TAP HOUSE** 6107-104 St, 701-0190
- J.L.'S** 13160-118 Ave, 489-7462
- J AND R BAR AND GRILL** 4003-106 St, 436-4403
- JAX BEAN STOP** 12761-50 St, 478-0480
- THE JOINT WEM**, 486-3013
- KHAZANA** 10177-107 St, 487-4844
- KICK START CAFÉ** 3611-99 St, 463-7132
- KINGSKNIGHT PUB** 9221-34 Ave, 433-2599
- L.B.'S** 111-23 Alans Dr, St. Albert, 460-9100
- LIONS HEAD** Coast Terrace Inn, 4440 Gateway Blvd, 431-5815
- LONGRIDER'S** 11733-78 St, 479-7400
- MANHATTAN CLUB** 10345-105 St, 423-7884
- MCDONALD'S UNITED CHURCH** Banquet hall, 101 St, one block south of Jasper Ave, 420-1757/488-7464
- MUTTART HALL** Alberta College, 10050 McDonald Dr, 423-6230/420-1757
- NEW CITY LIKVID LOUNGE** 10081 Jasper Ave, 413-4578
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13. Jennifer Wames – The Well (ryko)
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28. Joe Henry – Tiny Voices (anti)
29. Blackie & The Rodeo Kings – Bark (true north)
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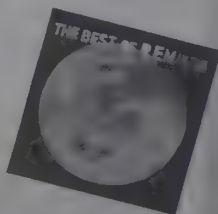
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MUSIC

Missile accomplished

The Tom Cruise Missile is now named Champion, Alberta —just to be difficult

By JERED STUFFCO

"Let's pretend we're a band," declares Rob Wood, vocalist/guitarist with the band formerly known as the Tom Cruise Missile (more on this later), at the outset of our interview, "and you can pretend you're a journalist."

Statements like these become commonplace when you sit down to chat with Wood and his bandmates. Since they burst onto the local music scene last year, it seems the trio has developed the reputation, deserved or not, of being, well, *difficult*. Rumours, whispers and gossip seem to follow the band wherever they go. One rumour claimed several of the band's original members literally went insane. Another had Wood ditching his guitar during live shows in favour of pushing buttons on his laptop. With this band, it's hard to know where truth ends and fiction begins.

"That was actually a drunken rumour," Wood says, explaining the laptop story. "It's one of those things. I don't really like the guitar as an instrument, and I find it really fucking frustrating. I have a lot of problems with the guitar as an instrument and I don't always like the way it sounds."

See what I mean? I thought rock bands were supposed to *like* guitars. "There isn't a straight line to our music," Wood says. "When we come up with an idea, it could be anything. We ask ourselves, 'Is this us?' If it isn't,

we throw it out. But it is non-linear."

As if they weren't difficult enough already, the band recently changed their name from the slightly droll Tom Cruise Missile to a moniker that's even more obtuse: Champion, Alberta. "We thought our old name was kind of a joke, and we're not really a joke band,"

PREVIEW INDIE

explains the band's bearded drummer, Tim Rechner. "We knew we were going to do it eventually; we might as well do it before we put out the CD."

"A lot of people that hadn't heard us but had seen the name thought that we would be a jokey teenage punk band," interjects Wood. "It was a very, very complicated joke."

NO KIDDING. Given all these complications, you could easily assume that Champion, Alberta revels in confusion. Indeed, the band's newly released EP *The Silk Purse* isn't technically even being released at all. Rather than going the traditional route of actually getting the disc manufactured, Champion, Alberta are taking their "difficult" indie ethos to the max—burning copies of the disc, fashioning homemade packages and distributing it at a "guerrilla-style CD release party." (Read: little to no advertising budget.)

Is this a statement? A rash re-ap-

praisal of what it means to release a CD? Perhaps a stern condemnation of the capitalist excesses inherent in the music industry? "Actually, the guy who was supposed to master it really cocked it up," Wood says. "Originally, we wanted to get it manufactured and released with a Canadian indie label, but right at this moment, it's about time and wanting people to fucking hear it—now! If we have to give it away, then that's what will happen."

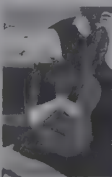
"And to have the material still relevant to what we're doing," Rechner adds. "If we're not playing these songs and we're not going to get [the CD] out, then it's kind of dumb."

Luckily, *The Silk Purse* is anything but difficult to listen to. An exhilarating mix of up-tempo guitar workouts, brooding synthesizers and atmospheric space-pop, the EP sums up the adventures of what was truly a banner year for local music. In a way, the band's guerrilla tactics are reminiscent of groups like the Flaming Lips, who once released—on a major label, no less—*Zaireeka*, a boxed set of albums meant to be played simultaneously on four different stereos, and *still* managed to get called brilliant.

Wood agrees. "That's not difficult," he says. "That's just a really good idea." ●

CHAMPION, ALBERTA

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root down

By JENNY FENIAK

Trained musician

Stewart MacDougall • With Lionel Rault • Festival Place • Fri, Nov 14
Since the mid-'70s, New Brunswick native Stewart MacDougall has been penning great Canadian folk songs. But by the end of the '90s, he was ready to start lending them his own fatherly voice.

After playing with Dave Wilkie as the Great Western Orchestra for seven years, MacDougall began work on his first solo recording, 1999's *Gathering*

Time. A couple of years later, while recording his 2001 release *heresy*, MacDougall was approached by longtime neighbour and local theatre director Ben Henderson with a script written by Mansel Robinson called *Ghost Trains*. "Mansel's father was a brakeman for the CPR," explains MacDougall. "On a personal level, this play is his eulogy for him—and on a bigger level, it's his eulogy for the Canadian railroad in general and the disappearance of the culture around it."

The companion album, *Ghost Trains: All of the Songs and Some of the Stories*, will celebrate its official release this weekend. As the title suggests, the play's eight songs are included along with nine spoken-word pieces lifted from the script and read by MacDougall. "There's some beautiful blank verse in the soliloquies," MacDougall says. "In the course of workshoping this thing, I fell in love with a lot of that and I thought, 'If I ever do get around to recording these songs, I'll

read a couple of those pieces."

MacDougall was a natural partner for the project, having grown up riding the rail lines with his mother as a young boy. By the time he was 18 and ready to leave home, it was the railroad that took him to Montreal, and later brought him and his wife all the way to Edmonton, where he's lived since 1980. Says the veteran musician, "My first impression of Edmonton was arriving downtown on the train where it doesn't stop anymore. I liked the town immediately."

This Van's a-rockin'

Rachelle Van Zanten • With Bobby Cameron • Sidetrack Café • Sat, Nov 15
The gardens of Edmonton may be asleep beneath their winter blanket, but one of the city's favourite Daisies will be warming things up this weekend. Rachelle Van Zanten, who founded local

SEE PAGE 32

air Farina

MARK FARINA



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Mark Farina's new arena

Celebrated house DJ ventures into artist disc territory with *Air Farina*

By JERED STUFFCO

It's been proven that a good producer doesn't always make a good DJ, and vice versa," declares perennial house favourite Mark Farina over the phone from his San Francisco home. "Nowadays, I think you have to prove yourself on both [production and DJing] sides, because dance music has become more streamlined and there's less chances being taken."

Obviously, Farina isn't alone in that sentiment. No longer content merely to spin records or stamp their name on the odd remix, dance music DJs—perhaps in a bid to gain a foothold in the "aboveground" music world—have been spending increasing amounts of time in studios these days. If the plethora of artist albums from the likes of Armin Van Buuren, Tiësto and Roger Sanchez are any indication, DJs seem to feel obliged to give their fans more than just the requisite mix CDs and an occasional, superfluous *Ibiza Anthems* compilation. Although he's no stranger to the studio—he had a hand in creating the ambient house classic "Mood" way back in 1989—Farina is among the latest DJs to throw his hat into the artist album ring with his brand-new LP, *Air Farina*.

"I just think it's always a good thing to do a full LP," explains the DJ/producer, whose acclaimed mix CDs *Mushroom Jazz* and *The San Francisco Sessions* have made him one of the most beloved house DJs in North America, "because it's a lot different from just doing a 12-inch or something. Generally, a 12-inch will just stay to vinyl or a dance music-specific crowd, and a mix CD is just a mix CD—it doesn't cross over the way having your own album does."

Farina admits the electronic scene can seem very confusing for those not steeped in the complex, ever-

PREVIEW HOUSE

changing rules and conventions of dance music. "With all the remixes and stuff, like 'This song is by somebody but remixed by someone else,'" he says, "it can be hard to decipher who's actually producing what."

THE SAME could also be said about DJ artist albums. While more than a few so-called "superstar DJs" such as Sasha and Paul Oakenfold have enlisted engineers to help them out with the technical side of studio work—with mixed results—Farina opted to take care of the production himself, using only the gear in his modest home studio and keeping the collaborations to a minimum. He says the approach was a key contributing factor to the album's decidedly stripped-down vibe and sample-heavy, almost lo-fi quality

"When you do an album," he says, "it's hard to refuse the 'bigger is better' concept of things, especially in production. There's so many ways to make a track, it's easy to get inundated with a whole bunch of musicians or get coerced into using a bigger studio. I was fearful of losing my sound—even moving the same gear I use at home to a bigger board is going to change the sound. I wanted a variety of stuff, but I also didn't want [the album] to get over-produced."

Air Farina, which Farina describes as "quirky, minimal-ish and Chicago-y," manages to fuse many disparate elements into a seamless whole—much like Farina's live sets, which often drift from deep house to downtempo hip hop in the space of a few hours. "I guess my style of DJing is always throwing in something strange just to mix things up," he says. "In some areas, you never know. Sometimes I'm into freaking people out."

Regardless, Farina must be doing something right. To add to his list of accomplishments, the DJ recently made a return appearance on *DJ* magazine's annual list of the world's top 100 DJs, as voted by readers. "It's always cool to be in there at all," he says. "You've got to have some house representation. Generally, the European guys dominate the top 10, so it's cool to just represent the American deep house sound." ☉

MARK FARINA

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Sweet smell of excess

Vancouver's Stinkmitt establishes a new world odour with *Scratch 'n' Sniff*

By PHIL DUPERRON

Combining elements of hip-grinding funk, hip-hop and electronica with oversexed attitudes and an over-the-top stage show, Vancouver's Stinkmitt have come up with their own musical style: trailer clash. And judging by critics' reactions to their debut disc, *Scratch 'n' Sniff*, they're ready to take to world by storm, or at least by the short hairs.

"We got really good reviews all

across Canada, which we were really shocked at," says MC Betti Forde. "We thought we were gonna get slagged—and we got total good reviews."

Stinkmitt started up as a liquored-up joke between Forde and her partner in crime MC Jenni Craige when they were on the prowl for some willing manflesh a year and a half ago. "Me and Jenni Craige

were wasted one night," Forde says, "and we were bitching about how we couldn't get laid and I was like, 'Yeah, fuck all those fuckers who won't fuck me.' And then we just started freestyling and it turned into 'Bangin' on My Clit,' which was the

first track we wrote."

For their first gig, they played just two songs during a burlesque show dressed in their best cheesy headbanger outfits. "They thought we made a wrong turn or something," Forde says, "and then we got onstage and they were like, 'What the fuck is going on? Like, why are these ugly banger chicks onstage?' And then we started rapping. People went insane. They loved us. They were like, 'You guys are the shit. You have to do this again.'"

And they did. A short time later, they pulled some strings to land an opening slot for Princess Superstar and unknowingly secured themselves a record deal in the process. Teenage USA Recordings was in the house and knew right away they had

to get these girls onto their roster. Enter keyboardist Dr. Do This and producer Mr. Bigstuff, who helped Stinkmitt become a recording reality. *Scratch 'n' Sniff* may be loaded with hilarious hip-hop grooves about bangin' booty and "Super Cronic," but Stinkmitt is no joke.

"If you don't have any musician-ship behind you, then you're a shtick band," Forde says. "That's definitely not us. Our producer was nominated for a Juno when he was 17. He was in fucking Organized Rhyme. All of us have had serious careers as musicians." Craige, for instance, has worked as a freestyle MC for several years, going mic to mic with other local rappers and routinely coming out on top. Forde, meanwhile, has been a jazz singer, a dancer, a funk DJ, a radio host and a music journalist for several years, so she's no slouch either.

IN FACT, the pair argues they're just part of the same great musical tradition as pioneering rock greats like Captain Beefheart, KISS, Alice Cooper and Frank Zappa. "All of those groups were serious musicians," Forde says, "but they were also really funny. Zappa being the most obvious example. I mean, he was hilarious and he was always making fun of something, but you can't tell me

he wasn't a serious musician or a good musician. We wanted to be in a band that we would love. We wanted to make a record that we would love. So that's why there's all the humour and dirtiness in it."

Fair enough. So what can the fine people of Edmonton expect from Stinkmitt when they take the stage? "Party sheep, penetration golden showers, three-part harmonies, the splits, stripper moves, freestyling," Forde replies. "Our live show is outta hand. Peaches is afraid of us—put it that way."

And for all those young male groupies in the audience, there's one surefire way to endear yourselves to the Mitt. "Anyone who wants to bring us drugs, we really love," Forde says. "If you wanna get down with Stinkmitt after the show, don't hang out and tell us you love us. We don't care—we just want you to give us drugs or alcohol. Like, buy us shots—otherwise just don't waste our time. Fans need to know fan etiquette. We don't care if you love us. What do you have to offer us? Okay nothing—move along. I'm not trying to be a cow here, but that's just the way the world works." ☺

STINKMITT

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Root Down

Continued from page 28

chick-rock band Painting Daisies with Daisy Groff back in 1995, will be popping her head up onstage with a solo set of her own songs. We may have heard them before, but not in this setting.

"We all kind of do our own thing," Van Zanten says over the phone from Salt Spring Island, where the Daisies are working on a new album in Randy Bachman's studio. "Sometimes [it's] just to take the songs to a different place, and it's also really nice to just be on your acoustic guitar. It's just something different from the band thing. I find it really pushes me as a player and a performer to hold an audience, especially at the Sidetrack, as a solo performer, because as a band, you can just turn up and overpower them. With a solo performance, you have to be smart, you have to be funny, you have to be on your toes, you have to make them shut up and make them listen, and so it's a lot more challenging."

Which may be why Van Zanten admits she prefers playing with the other Daisies. "[The band's] just a totally different rush, I guess," she says. "The whole rock 'n' roll thing is a lot more appealing to me with electric guitar and bass and drums." Although Van Zanten will be on her own this weekend, she's also taking time to front an old school bluegrass/country swing group called the La Di Da Band. But wherever she's playing, you're almost guaranteed to hear the sweet sound of a slide on her 1956 National Resophonic.

Good boy

In Memoriam: Santino (Sonny Boy) Kraatz (1995-2003) Animals are a phenomenal force in many people's lives, but Sonny Kraatz was an exceptional even by that standard, and his impact reached far beyond his owner. Jen Kraatz. Sonny earned his place in the world of music, first picking up on the mournful drawl of Richard Buckner's "Rainsquall," then catching onto the voices that surrounded him at Riverdale Records where he first lived. The voices of men such as Mike McDonald and Old Reliable's Shuyler Jansen and Mark Davis helped unlock Sonny's gift of song and once he was in touch with it, there was no shutting him up.

He sang live on CKUA, at the Dauphin Country Fest with Shawn "Swiftly" Jonasson, at Festival Place with Corb Lund and at the City Media Club with Chris Smith, who was convinced Sonny was a blues dog. "A lot of the old-time blues singers would try to imitate coyotes and dogs and trains, trying to get that mournful howl in their voice," Smith once mused. "So it's kind of the reverse of that—when Sonny hears the music, he picks up on the same thing." Sonny even hung out with Jack Endino of Nirvana fame while he was in town recording Bullproof's album.

Unfortunately, Sonny's gifted life was brought to a premature end last week by the nasty curse that is cancer. But rest assured there'll be a place for him in rock 'n' roll heaven—probably somewhere near the porch where the band is playing. ☺

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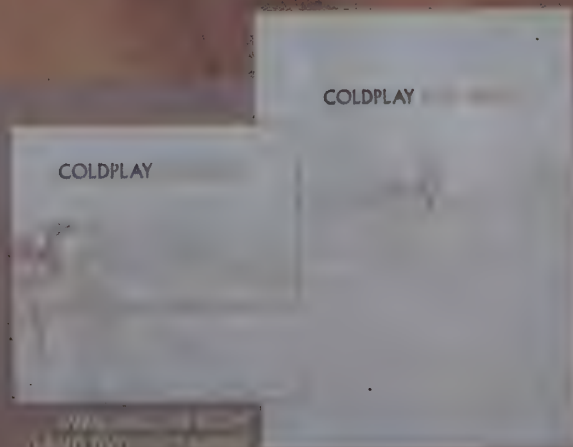
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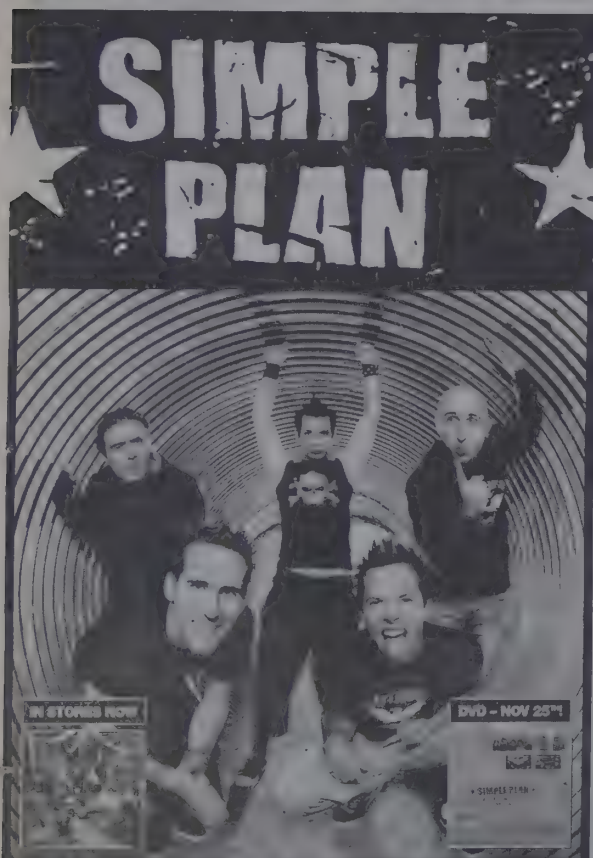
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MUSIC



street vision

By SEAN AUSTIN-JOYNER

Beef encounter

Music just wouldn't be the same without beefs. Then again, neither would life. In a world of boredom and routine, conflict is the meteor shower everyone wakes up in the middle of the night to watch, the car accident motorists hold up traffic to observe, the Vanilla Ice video you just can't turn off. Maybe it's because we like to see others coming off looking worse than ourselves, and seeing person A expose person B as a fraud, sellout or

ences and personal comments all aimed directly at Fiddy.

But was it 50 Cent's constant barrage of verbal attacks that put Ja Rule's blazing career out, or were Ja Rule's 15 minutes (okay, four years) of fame simply coming to an end?

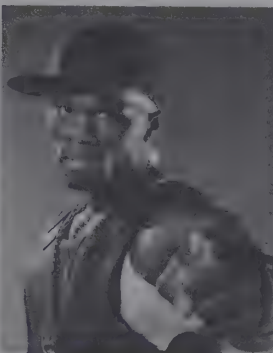
Here's a better question: should we care either way? As consumers, shouldn't we be more concerned with the content of the music than who slapped whom last? Because, all too often, those slaps turn into gun claps. And before you can say "overrated," we've got two more dead rappers with legendary status undeservedly conferred upon them. I'm not going to drag out the history of Bad Boy and Death Row Records, though that's probably the most notorious case.

There's been one figure in the black community who's actively taken steps to avoid the violent endings that so often cap hip-hop feuds. Shortly after Biggie and Tupac's deaths, Minister Louis Farrakhan took it upon himself to sit down with various musi-

down to speak with Farrakhan shows maturity and that he wants to bring an end to this feud. Many of the things he offers not only show the human side of hip-hop, but also give us something for all of us to think about."

Ironically, competition was key to the development of modern-day hip-hop. From breakdancing to DJing to graffiti and rapping, beefs are what kept hip-hop alive as a thriving artform despite a lack of interest from the mainstream media—just ask Afrika Bambaataa why he used to peel the labels off his records. But these days thanks to mass media coverage and a worldwide audience, the stage is definitely big enough for all artists to share. So when feuds arise in the public, they seem much pettier and more egotistical than ever before. After all, if there's enough bread to go around, why should I try to steal yours?

Wilson says these petty squabbles may make for great headlines, but they're hurting hip-hop culture in the long run. "Conflict is a significant



thief makes us feel that much better about our own situation—OutKast's 2001 song "The Whole World" would agree. The Germans even have a word for it: *schadenfreude*.

The latest (and most compelling) musical feud involves Murder Inc's Ja Rule and G-Unit's 50 Cent, two multi-platinum-selling rappers who have continuously, obsessively bashed each other on record after record. 50 certainly got the jump on his opponent, starting with "Ya Life's on the Line" and continuing throughout his debut solo album on songs like "Back Down," "Wanksta" and even unreleased songs like "I Smell Pussy," he unleashed an amazing stream of vitriol upon Ja, who seemed strangely willing to absorb it without retaliating. It seemed as if this battle were over—that is, until the recent release of Ja's new album, *Blood in My Eye*, which is littered with threats, refer-

cians in an attempt to settle their differences. Say what you like about Farrakhan, you've got to admit he's persistent—on October 23, he attempted a similar intervention, sitting down with Ja Rule in hopes of settling matters between the two bickering musicians.

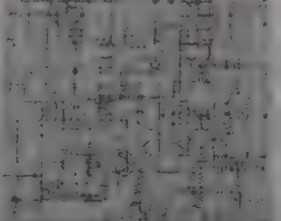
Marlon Wilson, the host of CJSR's *Urban Hang Suite*, will be playing the Ja Rule/Farrakhan interview on his show this Saturday at midnight. With 50's career on fire and Ja Rule's noticeably struggling, most people have decided which side they're sitting on. But Wilson says it's his responsibility to allow both sides equal time. "One thing missing from hip-hop right now is commentary that would explain what's going on," he says. "Many of these rappers that we see as just entertainers are articulate individuals who have more to say than what we hear on their records. The whole fact that Ja sat

dynamic of the art and its progression," he says. "Much like martial arts, conflict is encouraged in hip-hop to better your skills. However, the same thing that we as a hip-hop community thirst for has always been the route to our destruction. In a sad way, hip-hop in its rawest element can kind of be seen as a self-destructive artform, where egos and pride can often take the place of intellectual and artistic progression."

Although Farrakhan is well aware that easing tensions between Ja Rule and 50 Cent's followers will not eliminate name-calling in hip-hop, he's hoping to shed some light on the bigger picture—to make people realize that as these feuds grow, a lot of uninformed people will decide to make someone else's business their own. And at that point, all we can do is sit back and watch the gunfire. As Alexander Pope said, "A little learning is a dangerous thing." ●

Problems??

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Pissed Connected?

So imagine my surprise and delight to find the entire room packed with people having the time of their lives. Sanchez laid down a tough set of thundering and uplifting tribal grooves that tore the room apart.

It's a huge accomplishment for Connected Entertainment, who have spent the last year climbing out of nowhere to become a event production company worth watching. There were some uncomfortable murmurs in the local scene about an article that ran in the *Edmonton Journal's* *Ed* magazine the previous Saturday in which Connected was quoted as saying that some clubs would rather work with "two white kids from Sherwood Park" than a company

I'm not going to start jumping on clubs, promoters, journalists or anything, and I'm not prepared to call anyone a racist or a sensationalist, because I don't believe that anybody in this situation really is. When you don't know the entire story, it turns into *Rashomon*—everyone has a different but incomplete take on the tale. Overall, it's an unfortunate situation that's perhaps generated some hurt feelings and misunderstandings that can only lead to some lessons being learned.

It's no secret that racism remains a huge problem in 21st-century society. Media attention to gang violence has a lot of people concerned, if not frightened. Some people won't go to a club night if they hear there are Asians hanging out there. In Calgary, for instance, some clubs installed a strict door policy requiring people to carry several pieces of photo identification—and that policy was almost exclusively enforced with Asian patrons.

Personally, I was raised never to assume that ethnic background means anything. It's about character. "An asshole is an asshole, no matter what colour they are," my dad used to say, and I believe that. This subject has some meaning to me, because I'm frequently asked if I'm Asian. To be honest, I'm not—at least, not that I'm aware of. Besides, would it matter? Would someone treat me differently if I were Asian, or

Much of club culture has been victimized by stereotypes. There's no easy solution to beating stereotypes, but that doesn't mean the fight shouldn't be waged. In sort, I'm not willing to call anyone in this story a bad guy. All you can do is learn and move forward, and that's already under way.

Idealization aside, I should wrap up with some reasons why you should be

out there. Tonight (Thursday), San Francisco's finest house DJ is back at the Joint. **Mark Farina** has an excellent new album out on his label Om, *Air Farina*, and he's always a guaranteed good time. Halo resident (and my good friend) Junior Brown will be warming up the show. As for Connected, they've got the one and only **Erick Morillo** coming to the Standard next Thursday (November 20), who will definitely

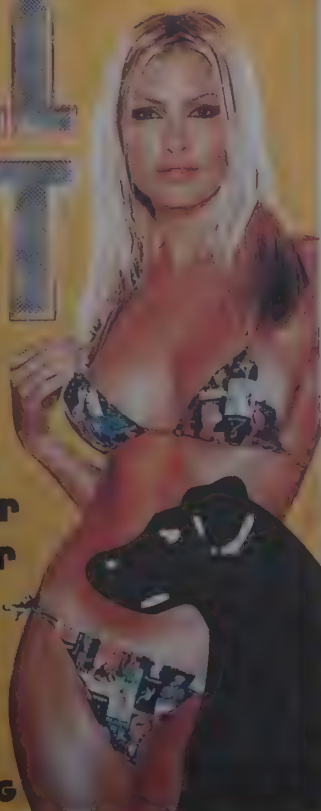
bring a big-time party vibe that might give the Sanchez show a run for its money. And finally, United's working on some stuff again, including a **Judge Jules/Lisa Lashes** production with Def Star down at Calgary's Whiskey Nightclub on December 7. Yeah, baby! 🍷

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classical notes

By ALLISON KYDD

Wedded bliss

I think there are two kinds of people in the world: those who actively listen to music and those who just want background noise for their other activities. But classical music as a whole—and last weekend's slate of concerts in particular—demands attention. With a few remarkable exceptions, if listeners let themselves be lulled into a comfortable reverie, they will inevitably be jolted out of it.

Montreal organist Patrick Wedd,

who played Howard Hanson's Concerto for Organ, Harp and String Orchestra at the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra Master's Series on Friday and Saturday, didn't let the audience drift off for a moment. Not only was Hanson's work enormous, but Wedd obviously enjoyed his encounter with the mighty Davis organ and literally pulled out all the stops. His solo cadenza on the pedals was particularly impressive, but the work had passages of great sweetness as well. The balance between orchestra and organ may have been a little off; the harp, who had started the piece as an equal partner, seemed to disappear entirely. But whether the performance or the writing was at fault (or whether this was a fault at all) is debatable.

Wedd's encore, the virtuosic finale from Louis Vierne's Symphony No. 1, continued at the same decibel level—definitely not for the faint of heart. Fortunately, there was a long break while the orchestra reassembled for Dimitri Shostakovich's saucy Symphony No. 9

in E-Flat Major. Visiting conductor Neal Gittleman, graceful and precise on the podium and, I hope, a candidate for the position of new ESO music director, endeared himself further by giving an apparently impromptu introduction to the final work. Stalin, he said, was not amused when Shostakovich gave him a compact and amusing work containing satirical premonitions of the repression to come. No doubt the notorious dictator was expecting a grand hymn to Soviet authority.

How things have changed! At the Winspear on November 16, Latvian organist Iveta Apkalna, winner of Russia's 2003 M. Tchaikovsky International Organ Competition, plays an unabashedly nationalistic program called *Latvian Lights* as part of the Sundays at 3 Organ Recital Series. Along with Latvian composers Kalejs, Vasks and Kalnins and a Jermaks *pascaglia* on the folk song that is Latvia's unofficial national anthem, Apkalna will play Bach and Prokofiev,

no doubt giving the Davis organ another workout in the process.

This Friday and Saturday night, the ESO Master's Series offers yet another Canadian music prodigy who has developed an international following. Born in 1972 in Vancouver, Corey Cerovsek took up the violin at five, won the Canadian Music Competition at nine, graduated from the Toronto's Royal Conservatory at 12 and completed his doctoral course studies at Indiana University at 18. On this return visit to Edmonton—he appeared with the ESO in 1998, 1994, 1991 and 1988—Cerovsek, known for his mastery of the instrument, sensitive interpretations and showmanship, will play Max Bruch's Violin Concerto No. 1 in G Minor.

Cerovsek won't be the only star, however. Almost every principal in the orchestra gets a solo in Alberto Ginastera's delightful *Variaciones concertantes*, which opens the concert, and Antonin Dvorak's Symphony No. 8 in G major promises to bring the

evening to a satisfying conclusion.

Last weekend was also a triumph for new music activists. After reflecting on the subtleties of German lieder in September, pianist Roger Admira became an ambassador for the avant-garde in November. Performing in the Fine Arts Building before an attentive audience of students, composers, U of A faculty and friends, he demonstrated the variety within the genre, from the jabbing staccato, bumps, thuds and strokes of Bruce Mather's *In Memoriam Alexandre Uninsky* to the sustained notes and tender ambivalence of eldritch Priest's *nape... wrinkle... linger*.

On Sunday, the Strathcona String Quartet graced the stage at the University of Alberta's Convocation Hall in a George Andriks tribute. Andriks, who is also the violist in the quartet, is known for his eclecticism, and his colleague (cellist Josephine van Lier and violinist Jennifer Buskin and Anna Kozak) threw themselves into their performance. They're also gorgeous. ☺

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Afterglow
2. **SHERYL CROW**
Very Best Of
3. **R.E.M.**
In Time: Best Of R.E.M.
4. **STROKES**
Room On Fire
5. **DIDO**
Life For Rent
6. **OUTKAST**
Speakerboxxx/The Love Below
7. **BOB JOVI**
This Left Feels Right
8. **RYAN ADAMS**
Rock 'N Roll
9. **TONY KEITH**
Shock 'N Y' Alli
10. **NICKELBACK**
Long Road (Ltd Ed)

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2. **MATRIX: RELOADED**
3. **FRIENDS: COMP 5TH SEASON**
4. **INDIANA JONES**
(Collection)
5. **MATRIX**
6. **HULK**
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NEW SOUNDS

DOVES

LOST SIDES

WHERE WE'RE CALLING FROM (DVD)
(HEAVENLY/EMI)

It took years for Sub Sub to become Doves. Studios burning down, tapes lost and the death of a mentor could have made brothers Jez and Andy Williams and frontman Jimi Goodwin a dour lot. The albums that ensued—*Lost Souls* and *The Last Broadcast*—may have been moody, but they were far too epic to be called dour. After all, these were guys who met at the Hacienda during the ascent of rave culture. (And if you don't know what the Hacienda was, do yourself a favour and rent *24 Hour Party People* and listen to some old Joy Division and New Order.)

Lost Sides is an updated version of a promo-only compilation featuring unreleased material and B-sides, but it's certainly strong enough to be considered a proper album in its own right. Like the Chemical Brothers, there's a spectral character to Doves'

post-rave guitar revival and you can hear its development on these tracks—ostensibly outtakes that lesser Brit-rock bands would kill to claim for themselves as singles. Bouncing tracks like "Your Shadow Lay Across My Life" and "Crunch" nod to the trio's Sub Sub days, while the low end of "Darker" lets a ray of shining guitar into the gloom.

Where *We're Calling From* rolls the Doves into a superb audio/visual document headlined by a live concert in stunning surround sound (with a plain ol' stereo option), buttressed by short films and eight videos—including the stunning retro splash of "Here Comes the Fear." Round that out with the requisite photo gallery, a couple of documentaries, a lush 3D interface and bits of sonic noodling, and you've got a DVD that's well worth the dosh. And if you're really industrious, you can seek out the hidden Sub Sub documentary—it's well worth the effort, if only to see what the Hacienda really looked like on a Saturday night. **Both:** ★★★★★ —DAVE JOHNSTON



SARAH McLACHLAN

AFTERGLOW

(NETTWERK)

It's been six years since Sarah McLachlan last stepped into a recording studio. In that time, she's become a mother and lost her own, and that's a heavy weight for anyone to bear. The world is also a much different place. Those conditions appear to be the root of *Afterglow*'s soothing, patient tone, directed once again by producer Pierre Marchand. There are too few occasions on *Afterglow* where McLachlan lets her broken voice soar—instead she settles for a calm, if haunted whisper wrapped up in subtle melodies, starting with the strong opening track, "Fallen." Yet not even the somber allusions to crashing planes and "dark ages" on the 9/11-inspired "World on Fire" prompt McLachlan to elicit even a wounded howl—instead, she seems to drift through the track like a resigned, helpless spirit.

However, *Afterglow* isn't a total disappointment. "Train Wreck" comes close to the uplifting pop of "Angel," while the closing "Dirty Little Secret" is an elegant torch song where McLachlan's hushed delivery becomes the song's mightiest asset, turning it into a late-night confessional from an old flame. The engaging love song "Answer" benefits from the inclusion of Barenaked Ladies bassist Jimmy Creegan, while several other numbers feature cellist Jorane, most effectively on the striking "Stupid." In the end, *Afterglow* sounds like McLachlan in the midst of a transformation. ★★★★★ —DAVE JOHNSTON

JET

GET BORN

(ELEKTRA/WARNER)

As I listened to Jet's debut record *Get Born*, I had to keep checking the back of the jewelcase to see if it came out in 1973 or 2003. Don't get me wrong—this is a band that knows how to craft vintage-sounding rock without sounding like a dorky retro outfit. Take the first single, "Are You Gonna Be My Girl"—it's so good, I think I'd like the Muzak version just as much. To put it in perspective, *Get Born* is what Sloan would sound like if they spent less time on harmonies and more time on rocking. Jet's drummer Chris Cester is a particular standout—he's got more fills than a Phil convention. (Sorry, my cheeseball jokes sometimes get the better of me.) Anyway, apart from a couple of mediocre tracks, this disc is a must-have for all you rockers out there. I only hope that Jet gets around to covering "Jet" by Wings on their next record, due out in 1975... er, I mean 2005. ★★★★★ —DAVID LAING



BLINKER THE STAR

STILL IN ROME

(MAPLEMUSIC)

The fourth Blinker the Star album comes at you with a creamy, energetic and at times cheesy grunge-pop sound. Originally from Montreal but now dwelling in Pembroke, Ontario, frontman Jordan Zadorozny inhabits an odd musical grey area—he's too hard for radio play but not hard enough to be taken seriously. There are hints of '80s rock here—Ozzy mixed with Urge Overkill—but with borderline jokey lyrics, vocals and hooks. The drum sound is top-notch and the mix is perfect; unfortunately, with this style of music, overproduction sticks out like a sore thumb.

Still in Rome seems to have been crafted with a very specific market in mind—call them the hard-easy-listening set. Joe College types. For lyrical low-lights, the repetitive, would-be motivational track "Got to Go Through It" is where it's at: "Don't stop, do it.... Believe you'll do what you're meant to do.... Take a chance on my advice, don't stop, do it, got to go through it.... You keep that dream alive when you close your open eyes and see in front of you.... Don't stop, do it." Not a terrible record and probably not a bad live band, either. But hearing them on disc is like listening to ZZ Top meets Mrs. Doubtfire dressed in Goth. ★★ —MARK RABIN

PEARL JAM

LOST DOGS

(SONY/EPIC)

On Pearl Jam's latest B-side double-disc, the band crams 31 previously unreleased tracks spanning their career from their first record, *Ten*, to their latest, *Riot Act*. There are a lot of gems here, especially the kooky, fun material from the early part of the band's career, but in many cases it's all too obvious why a lot of these songs weren't released in the first place. I'm not saying they're awful; they're just not particularly worthwhile. Still, it's interesting to see what tracks didn't make the cut on certain records, and I'd rather listen to a band's B-sides than their greatest hits any time. And I'm sure that if Eddie Vedder had done himself in instead of that guy from that other famous Seattle band, some of these tracks would be getting held up as classics. ★★ —DAVID LAING

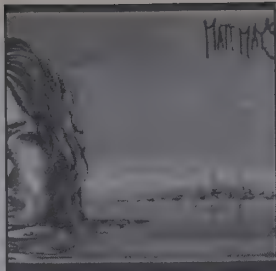
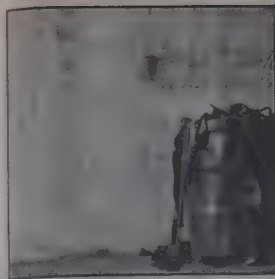
SUN RA

SPACE IS THE PLACE (DVD)

(PLEXIFILM)

Filmed in 1974 on the same soundstages the Mitchell Brothers were also using to shoot the porn film *Behind the Green Door*, *Space Is the Place* tried to convey a much more uplifting message to its audiences than the Mitchell—





but instead was seen by practically nobody and is only resurfacing now on a DVD which restores it to its original 82-minute running time. *Space Is the Place* is the only feature film to star Sun Ra, the eccentric, UFO-obsessed jazz bandleader whose larger-than-life persona was like an amalgamation of Duke Ellington, George Clinton and Frank Zappa. The film begins with Ra and his Arkestra landing their bright yellow, music-propelled spaceship on a distant paradise planet that Ra declares the perfect spot for a massive Marcus Garvey-style relocation of the black race. But when he travels to 1974-era Oakland, California to begin recruiting passengers, he runs afoul of a cackling pimp named the Overseer, who, in a scene inspired by Ingmar Bergman's *The Seventh Seal*, challenges Ra to a high-stakes card game for...

For what? For the soul of every black person on the planet... er, I think. To tell the truth, following the plot of *Space Is the Place* is as difficult as following the melodies of Ra's wild free-jazz compositions, several of which get performed over the course of the film. (The script is credited to Joshua Smith, but judging from the way it careens from sci-fi parody to blaxploitation flick to concert film to quasi-mystical "message movie," I'm guessing he wasn't the only person throwing ideas into the mix.) *Space Is the Place* is a heady mix of Black Power politics and psychedelic entertainment the likes of which we'll probably never see again, but Ra's disappointingly uncharismatic screen presence and director John Conney's careless filmmaking fail to make it much more than a curiosity piece... albeit one with an this head proudly emblazoned upon it. ★★★ —PAUL MATWICHUK

MATT MAYS MATT MAYS (SONIC/WARNER)

When young rocker Matt Mays briefly stepped in front of the stage during Joel Plaskett's gig at the New City Likwid Lounge last weekend and danced the Robot for a few seconds, Plaskett made sure to give props to his fellow Haligonian. It wasn't exactly a passing-the-torch moment, but when an ultra-talented, high-achieving guy in his late 20s gives his nod to someone in their mid-20s, you might want to watch for them to attempt a similar skyward path.

Mays, 24, straddles the line between country and rock at times, yet he left his twangy Halifax band the Guthries to stake his own claim. This eponymous disc showcases Mays's taste for '70s-style southern-fried rock, with definite blasts of Neil Young, the Skydiggers and CCR (and one track, "Lonely Highway Night," that's a dead ringer for Blue Rodeo). But Mays has his own voice: the empathetic vocals tackling

love, longing and loss belie his age and his songs careen down the track toward moodiness with locomotive steam. Throw in pedal steel from Blue Rodeo's Bob Egan on a couple of songs and lovely touches like Phil Sedore's cello and you've got a keeper. Mays opened for Sam Roberts before he popped over to the Plaskett show. He'll have his own stage soon. ★★★ —DAN RUBINSTEIN

LIVING COLOUR COLLIDESCOPES (SANCTUARY/EMI)

After a hiatus of more than a decade, the band that was once hailed as metal's next big thing tries to reconnect with the hard-rock audience. Hopefully we've all progressed to the point where Living Colour's all-black lineup is no longer a novelty, but the band makes sure race is front and centre on their new disc, *Collidescope*, with a painfully obvious cover of AC/DC's "Back in Black."

With players as talented as bassman Doug Wimbish and drummer Will Calhoun, you'd think that the band (who produced this disc themselves) would allow them to be heard. But the funkified bottom end which was always a Living Colour trademark is buried on the metal-edged songs—a crying shame, since it gives the impression that the album's guitar-driven tunes are meant to do nothing more than show off Corey Glover's vocal range and Vernon Reid's jazz-influenced leads.

It's when the band moves away from metal that they show their creative juices are still flowing. "In Your Name" sees the band embracing the world of

electronics with crashing synths and rhythms that rock harder than any of the guitar-led tracks. But perhaps the most stunning track is "Flying," on which Glover assumes the character of a man jumping to his death from a World Trade Center tower right after the September 11 attack, accompanied by a hauntingly happy jazz guitar lead from Reid. It's a mixed bag, but give LC credit for not re-recording "Cult of Personality" 12 or so times and trying to pass it off as new material. ★★★ —STEVEN SANDOR

DIDO LIFE FOR RENT (ARISTA)

Chipper and utterly forgettable. Sorry. It doesn't matter how well you might think Dido sings, there's nary a note of emotional commitment on any of the songs on this album. Not one. Dido cruises through songs like "Stoned" like a consummate professional, hitting every note and cue, and never once convincing me she believes in anything coming out of her mouth. She could be singing about boiled cabbage and her music would have the same lack of resonance. On tracks where she's supposedly musing over loneliness and heartache, she frequently sounds disturbingly happy. This bland and predictable disc is especially surprising, considering the dramatic anthems Dido's brother (and producer) Rollo Armstrong has composed as Faithless. On her debut, *No Angel*, Dido displayed a raw talent for belting out songs and revealing emotions in spite of herself. That quality is sorely missed. ★★ —DAVE JOHNSTON

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Traveler fellow

Colin James voyages back to more familiar territory on his new CD

By DAVE JOHNSTON

You never know what Colin James is going to do next. Just when he reaches a point in his career where he could have easily settled into the mould of a bluesman, strumming out beer-soaked ballads, James will slam out an album of big band swing, years before the fad ever hits the mainstream. And then he'll do a full-out rock record.

"I like a lot of different kinds of stuff," James says over the phone during a stop in Quebec City. "It's never a conscious decision to do an about-face to completely confound people. It's never like that. I'm not the same person I was when I was 22, so you evolve regardless. There's just so much stuff that I love. Not that it doesn't come without its dangers, but it's nice to do some R&B, the Little Big Band thing, and then turn around and write songs in a more contemporary way. I'm happy I've done it this way, because I don't think I could have survived otherwise."

This time out, James says he set out to record two contemporary records in a row—*Traveler* and its predecessor, *Fuse*. "I was really happy with [*Fuse*]," James says about the album he wrote with Chris Northey. "Whenever you make a transition record, going from the Little Big Band to something like [*Fuse*], something's got to suffer. People thought they had me nailed as being a blues guy after *National Steel* and the Little Big Band, and then I came to a more modern sound. That record has some of my favourite recordings I've ever done."

TRAVELER, HOWEVER, comes very close to the raw blues that defined James early in his professional career, balancing original material—some

penned in tandem with Northey—with offbeat covers. James was looking to break out of a pattern, beginning with a choice of producer. He finally settled upon fellow Canadian Mark Howard, who had settled in Los Angeles and worked with Lucinda Williams.

"I had a wish list—I really wanted Daniel Lanois, but who doesn't?" James laughs. "Mark's name was brought up to me by some friends in Hamilton, Tom Wilson and Colin Cripps. I went down to [Los Angeles] when Lucinda was recording there, and I was really impressed by the studio. I love Joe Hardy [as a producer], but it was time to find someone who had a different take on things."

James appreciated Howard's approach. "He wanted to dirty things up a bit," he says. "He wanted to stay away from using ProTools to clean things up, so everything had a more earthy feel right off the bat. I don't like flat notes and gaffes, but sometimes if you leave things for a couple of days and you go back, you realize that it's fine. It's often the case that you get self-conscious after doing take after take of a solo—you ask yourself, 'What am I doing?'"

THE ENERGY of those sessions is evident from the outset of *Traveler*, which begins with a cover of John Lennon's "I'm Losing You," a song James recorded in a single take. "The entire guitar [part] was done straight through, with no punch-in," James says proudly. "It's the first take. There's a part where my hands brush against the strings and it was left in, and I've grown to like it. My first instinct would have been to get rid of it."

Howard kept the stakes high for James throughout the recording, setting up microphones everywhere for the recording of another cover, Nick Drake's "Black Eyed Dog," which left the guitarist no room to escape. "There was no going back," James says. "It had to be five minutes complete, and you can hear Mark's chair move in the first four seconds of the song. I like that—every time I hear it, I remember that moment."

Already, though, James is willing to throw himself into another about-face for his next record. "Next time, I want to walk into a studio and do an old-fashioned record, where all the songs have been picked out for me," he laughs. "All I have to do is say, 'Alright, what are we doing today?'"

COLIN JAMES

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Artists of the floating world

Peter Weir and Russell Crowe anchor the thrilling *Master and Commander*

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

Everyone who sees *Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World* will probably each choose a different moment to fall in love with Jack Aubrey, the stubborn but resourceful captain of the H.M.S. *Surprise*, played with stirring conviction by Russell Crowe. Some will fall for him early on in the film, when he gazes through a telescope into a distant fogbank and spots a blaze of enemy cannonfire in just enough time to order his men to hit the deck before the splinters start flying. Some may go for the sentimental moment, soon after the battle, when he gives an injured 12-year-old midshipman a book about Lord Nelson's greatest victories at sea. (Aubrey served under Nelson on the Nile, and Crowe has a charmingly eager moment where he tells the boy the chapter about that battle can be found "on page 135, if I'm not mistaken.") And still others may prefer the dinner scene where Aubrey arranges for the ship's cook to prepare a special pudding in the shape of the Galapagos Islands (their destination)—it arrives at the table complete with a tiny, edible replica of the French frigate they're chasing, which Aubrey gobbles up with a spoon.

Myself, I knew Aubrey was a man after my own heart during an earlier dinner scene when he spots two maggots on one of the serving plates, a sight that he uses as an excuse for inflicting an unspeakably awful pun upon his longtime friend and trusted advisor, ship surgeon Stephen Maturin (Paul Bettany). ("He who would pun would pick a pocket!" sputters the outraged Maturin.) The rest of his fine performance aside, the fact that Crowe can roar with what sounds like absolutely genuine laughter at Aubrey's horrible play on words, in my view, automatically qualifies him for Oscar consideration.

Master and Commander is based on the first of the late Patrick O'Brian's much-beloved Aubrey/Maturin

adventure novels—a 20-volume series whose painstaking research into the minutiae of 19th-century seamanship and the history of naval warfare earned O'Brian a reputation as the Tom Clancy of the Napoleonic Wars. But that bit of critical shorthand is sloppy and misleading; Clancy isn't half the storyteller O'Brian was, and none of Clancy's novels contain a single relationship as interesting or appealing or warmly combative as the one between Aubrey and Maturin.

REVIEW ADVENTURE

Crowe and Bettany appeared opposite one another in *A Beautiful Mind*—Bettany was the college roommate who turns out to be a figment of Crowe's imagination—and in some ways, Maturin and Aubrey are like the better parts of each other's personalities as well. Maturin is the level-headed skeptic who keeps Aubrey's more reckless tendencies in check, while Aubrey is the charismatic leader who holds down mutinies and inspires his men into battle through sheer force of personality. These are iconic characters, but both actors play them within recognizably human dimensions—director Peter Weir makes a point of placing them as much as possible within cramped rooms or among dozens of other crewmen or dwarfed by the amazingly complicated rigging of the *Surprise*'s sails, so that they always seem like part of a larger organization rather than larger-than-life Hollywood heroes.

CROWE IS THE ONLY well-known actor in the entire film (unless you count Billy Boyd, Pippin from the *Rings* films, who has a small part as a cheerful coxswain); Weir seems to have tried to honour O'Brian's love of authenticity by populating the *Surprise*'s crew with faces we won't recognize from other movies. (My favourite is George Innes, cast as a loony old able seaman with "HOLD FAST" tattooed on his knuckles who survives getting a hole knocked in his skull early on in the action and spends the rest of the film hovering malignantly at the edges of the frame.)

Master and Commander contains at least three wildly ambitious action set-pieces—two major sea battles and a storm off Cape Horn that nearly caus-

es the *Surprise* to capsize—and Weir stages them all superbly. I can only assume a huge percentage of what we see onscreen was accomplished with computers, but if so, it never looks that way. The two ships—the aging *Surprise* and a state-of-the-art French "super-frigate" called the *Acheron*—never once seem like models; there's a heft, a sense of personality to them, as they roll across the ocean and battle the wind and the waves. And that ocean looks pretty convincing, too—the storm sequence is an amazing showcase of special effects, sound and the clean, lucid editing of Lee Smith.

But it's the moments between the battles that really distinguish *Master and Commander*—and which Weir plainly regards as the most important part of the film. (Significantly, instead of the expected bombastic "epic" score, the composers take their cues from the quiet, sprightly violin and cello duets Aubrey and Maturin play in their spare time.) Just as Weir avoids shoving colourful period details in your face but instead lets a quiet sense of authenticity gradually seep into the film, Weir's script (co-written with John Collee) allows the personalities of the *Surprise*'s various crewmembers to gradually assert themselves: Lee Ingleby, for instance, is particularly effective as an indecisive midshipman who gradually cracks up under the silent antipathy of the crew.

Master and Commander is the kind of expensive, lavishly designed film that only the Hollywood studio system has the resources to produce—and it's also the kind of rousing, thoroughly satisfying entertainment that can only occur on those rare occasions when that system is working properly. It's a thrilling wartime epic that still finds time for musical interludes and an extended nature trip to the Galapagos Islands. The ship we root for in the film is the *Surprise*, but *Master and Commander* is more like the *Acheron*—it may be thick and heavy, but it's faster and nimbler than just about anything else on the waves. **C**

MASTER AND COMMANDER

THE FAR SIDE OF THE WORLD

Directed by Peter Weir • Written by Peter Weir and John Collee • Starring Russell Crowe and Paul Bettany • Opens Fri, Nov 14

Positively Babys

John Sayles refuses to let anyone off the hook in scathing *Casa de los Babys*

By MINISTER FAUST

I loved *Casa de los Babys*, the new film by John Sayles, and one of the major reasons I loved it is because the film accomplishes what all art, in my opinion, should achieve: it expands my understanding of why people do what they do, even though I might initially despise them for it. It gives me reason to have compassion for people who seemingly deserve none. It reminds me that 99 per cent of the time, bad behaviour has its origin in misery, loneliness and fear.

Casa de los Babys is the story of the people who are directly or indirectly connected to the lucrative international trade in human babies—not for slavery or sexual exploitation, but for the fulfillment of the basic human need to love and be loved. Sayles (*The Brother From Another Planet*, *Matewan*, *Lone Star*) is a master at revealing the lives of ordinary people and the extraordinary nature of their seemingly ordinary pain, and here he presents a group of

potential adopters, the women who give away their babies, the people running the adoption infrastructure and the teeming street children who are apparently unadoptable because they're too old, too indigenous, too dirty, too "used." Throughout *Casa*, Sayles forces us to see the ugliness, selfishness, stupidity and moral decay of the people involved on all sides, and then—yank!—shows us how they fell as far as they did.

REVUE **DRAMA**

The film's focus is on six wealthy white American women who've arrived in an unnamed Latin American country to adopt their babies—and even if they don't see themselves as wealthy, they certainly are by the standards of the city they've traveled to. We see the American women lounging over breakfast and attempting blindingly awful Spanish while Aryan überfrau Daryl Hannah exerts herself at the pristine beach, swimming in the cold water and then jogging in empty exertion.

Sayles juxtaposes these scenes against images of legions of indigenous people rising early to walk to work, indigenous street children

squeezing cars and juggling balls while literally dressed as clowns, all to earn enough coins to survive another day. We see the workers who clean the casa (including some who were forced to give away their own children), a local adoption lawyer who suffers the abrasive, colonialist abuse of an American would-be mother, the desperate homeless boys whose every deed, crime and act of self-destruction screams out "Feed me! Hold me! Love me!" And so it's tempting to hate the parasitic "baby imperialists" for whom the casa is their own private Guantanamo Bay, their base of occupation through which indigenous babies will be permanently disappeared.

BUT SAYLES REFUSES to let us off the moral hook quite so easily. One by one, through their exquisite ensemble performances, the Yanqui women (Maggie Gyllenhaal, Daryl Hannah, Marcia Gay Harden, Susan Lynch, Mary Steenburgen and Lili Taylor) reveal the misery that has brought them to the casa—the collapsing marriages, the inability to love anyone else, the endless deceptions of the artificial insemination industry, the refusal to dare to conceive after three miscarriages. We see, objectively, that as a group these women are part of a

system of racial and economic privilege that exploits and deforms the country they're occupying, and yet we also see them as individuals scarred and deformed by appalling personal pain and emotional destitution.

Marvelously, Sayles also refuses to portray the local population as long-suffering noble savages or one-dimensional voiceless victims. Endlessly engaging grande dame Rita Moreno plays the owner of the casa; her brother is the adoption lawyer who liaises with the federal government. They both despise their generally infantile guests, yet no matter how much the national pride of Moreno and her brother is insulted, they are complicit in the sale of their country's children. They may not be gleeful while doing it, but they are exploiting these walking female traffic accidents from the North, stringing them along as long as they can, making them, in the words of one character, "earn our babies" through exorbitant motel fees, restaurant charges and legal retainers. In *Casa de los Babys*, everyone has a reason to feel hurt and

angry. Everyone is dirty, everyone is exploiting someone—everyone, that is, except the babies themselves.

Casa de los Babys is not a plot-oriented film. There are character arcs, but it's not an A-to-B-to-Z kind of flick. The film doesn't start with the "star" arriving and while it sort of ends with someone leaving, we know this isn't the end of the narrative. These women may think they're leaving the pound with the longed-for puppy who'll heal all their pain and emptiness, but their troubles have just changed form. After all, their babies will not look like their wealthy Anglo mothers in an America in which race matters more than almost anything else. And the rubble of that parent-child relationship will be around for decades in an America full of babies who already need adoption but are the wrong colour to get it. **B**

CASA DE LOS BABYS

Written and directed by John Sayles •

Starring Maggie Gyllenhaal, Daryl Hannah, Marcia Gay Harden, Susan Lynch, Rita Moreno, Mary Steenburgen and Lili Taylor • Opens Fri, Nov 14

Luis Buñuel raises some *Él*

Metro Cinema screens two obscure gems by legendary Spanish surrealist

By JOSEF BRAUN

One of the many immensely enjoyable gems of Spanish filmmaker Luis Buñuel's prolific and too-seldom-seen body of work made during his exile in Mexico, 1952's *El Bruto*, a fable-like tale of power, passion and exploitation, is in many ways surprisingly typical of Mexican melodramas of the period. The overt, often politically charged surrealism that so distinguishes both Buñuel's renowned early films (such as *Un Chien Andalou*, his collaboration with Salvador Dalí) and later works (like *Belle de Jour* or

the Oscar-winning *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*) is all but absent in *El Bruto*. But rather than dull the film's subconscious potency or imagery, Buñuel's restraint rewards us with the more subtle subversions of his sly playfulness with genre conventions, some wonderfully black humour and much raw, direct, emotional and sensual power.

REVUE **CLASSIC**

Written by Buñuel with Luis Alcoriza (who also co-wrote *The Exterminating Angel*, one of Buñuel's most outrageous, nihilistic and bizarre Mexican features, which was a sort of practice run for *Discreet Charm*), *El Bruto* opens with a series of sharp, succinct expository scenes that almost read like a dark, satirical version of the Mexican golden age classic *Nosotros los Pobres*

(*We the Poor*). These scenes depict a group of nearly destitute families living in a tenement block who are being forced into eviction by heartless landowner Don Andrés (Andrés Soler). But rather than sanctify his poor characters through a lens of immovable nobility (as was normally the case in films of the period), Buñuel and Alcoriza show them fighting and stealing from one another. On one hand, this allows for some terrifically bleak gags (like the daughter who refuses to spurge on costly medication for her sick mother, only to spend her money instead on a pack of cigarettes), but ultimately it also reveals poverty for what it is: a state of need that often forces people into acts of cruelty.

The title character enters our story when Don Andrés decides to hire someone to put a scare into the ten-

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SEE PAGE 43

Teenagers in lust

Hormones and macho attitudes rule the day in *Raising Victor Vargas*

By BRIAN GIBSON

deals with Victor's macho attitudes or the distorted body images that teen girls feel prey to (and leering guys prey on). *Real Women Have Curves*, a similarly gritty low-budget film from earlier this year which also starred amateur Latino actors (and which also went straight to video without playing Edmonton theatres), looked more deftly and deeply at the social pressures on adolescent girls.

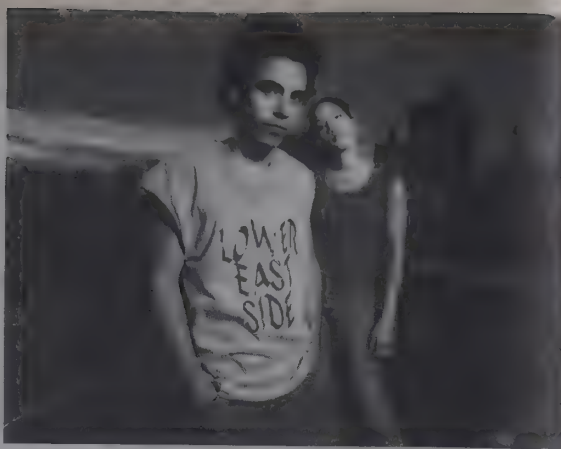
Victor seems to have adopted his "player" attitude towards the

ment in rosy-hued light and casting two light-skinned, handsome-in-that-generic-Hollywood-way actors as his Hispanic Romeo and Juliet. (The nervous courtship of the homebody Vicki by Judy's freckled, lisping brother seems more naively realistic.) Meanwhile, the outsider romance between Harold and Judy's bookish friend Melonie (Melonie Diaz) is too brief and awkwardly improvised to offset the easy love between Victor and Judy, who look like two fresh-faced Tommy Hilfiger models.

REVUE VIDEO

women around him as an act of homage to his philandering father. Desperate to dispel the rumours swirling around him and Donna, he goes after the slender, aquiline-featured Judy (Judy Marte), who eventually accepts his macho, pathetic advances just so some older boys will stop harassing her with their pornographic come-ons.

This is a gritty, depressing ghetto world of guys versus dolls, where young girls are relentlessly hit on and cool little men can't have their reps (or their fragile egos) tarnished by being seen with anyone who isn't considered sufficiently "hot." Director Peter Sollett sanitizes the milieu, though, by shooting Victor's apart-



STILL, EVEN THOUGH *Raising Victor Vargas* offers a fairly standard teen love story, it's also a solid, intriguing look at an immigrant family in New York. After Victor tosses out the phone in a desperate effort to prevent his vengeful sister from telling people about him and Donna, their grandmother (Altagracia Guzman) has it fixed and then locked up, despite complaints from the three children. (Rasuk's younger brother plays Victor's younger, softer-featured brother Nino.) An elderly woman who came to the United States from the Dominican Republic, Grandma is the three kids' endearing but overprotective guardian. She favours the piano-playing, soft-spoken Nino, is strict with the rebellious Victor and spends much of her time in the neighbour-

hood Catholic church.

At one point, Grandma is at her wits' end with Victor, who's been imparting his advice about the opposite sex, including his trademark lip-licking move, to Nino (who's too shy to go out and get girls, preferring to stay home and vent his sexual frustration in the bathroom). She takes him to family court in the hope that the government will take care of her grandson. It's a fascinating scene, as the older Dominican woman tries to explain to the social worker that Victor's done nothing illegal, only bring bad ideas into her house.

In the film's best off-the-cuff moments, all the actors are utterly convincing, particularly Guzman as the prickly Grandma and Marte as

the confident Judy. In their separate ways, they put the falsely macho Victor in his place. After Victor cockily told Nino that women look at your lips, not your eyes, his Grandma scolds him: "Answer with your eyes, not with your head." And when Judy finally agrees to go out with Victor, she tells him, "You're my new man, but don't fuck with me."

Unlike its ragged, unsettling opening, the short, slice-of-life *Raising Victor Vargas* closes gracefully with the strains of Nino's piano-playing concluding the film on a low-key, downbeat note. ●

RAISING VICTOR VARGAS

Written and directed by Peter Sollett • Starring Victor Rasuk, Judy Marte and Altagracia Guzman • Now on video

"Rowdy" Roddy Piper vs. Neo

Anti-cool *They Live* entered *The Matrix* long before the Wachowskis did

By MINISTER FAUST

The results are in: people hate *The Matrix: Revolutions*. But they're being unfair; *Revolutions* is markedly different from its predecessors and vastly superior to *Reloaded*, delivering mayhem by the bloody bucketful and robots by the, well, robotorium-full. So why is the hi-res bloom off *The Matrix's* virtual rose? Don't people care that *The Matrix* is posing more complex metaphysical and eschatological questions about reality, good and evil? Nope. Are folks irritated with the boring characters, their stilted "dialogue" and their lack of development? Probably.

But perhaps one of the biggest sources of disappointment with the *Matrix* sequels is the absence of the political-economic critique that the original film contained. The original *Matrix* was anti-consumerist—perhaps even anti-capitalist. In the world of lies, Morpheus and his followers are Antarcitically cool fashion fetishists. But follow them into the real world and suddenly they're all wearing humble rags. In the film's

climactic train-station battle, Neo's clothing isn't fancy, but torn and ordinary. He's beaten the power of cool, overturned the capitalist triumph of superficiality over substance, of illusion over reality—at least, until the final shot of the film when he's all funkified.

Click on *Reloaded*. Now the "good guys" are so idiotically "cool" they have a kot-tam rave two minutes after being warned they're all going to die; thank the Architect that all the smelly seniors, children and flabby normals are kicked out so as not to spoil anyone getting their

REVUE VIDEO

analogue groove on.

Want relief? Try John Carpenter's *They Live*.

If you've never heard of it, no wonder; the leading SF film magazine *Starlog* kiboshed the film after it opened, presumably because arch-anticommunist publisher Kerry O'Quinn wanted to shank a film with such an overtly anti-capitalist message. Plus the film didn't feature Asian martial arts, wire work or a techno-gothic look with eye-smacking special effects. Made for only \$3 million, it was cheap even in 1989.

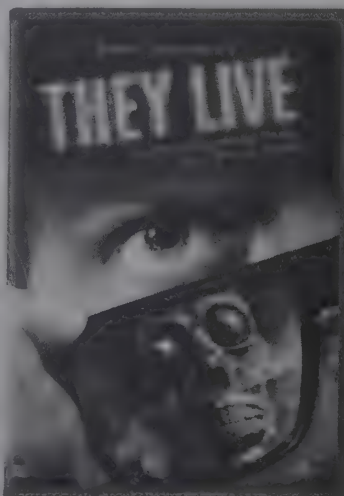
But it's one of Carpenter's best films and its deliciously anti-cool attitude can be savoured on a recently

released DVD edition. No designer clothes here; its working-class hero Nada is played with unaffected honesty by "Rowdy" Roddy Piper, while his friend Frank is played by the brilliant Keith David. First things first: put down this paper right now and go rent the film and do not let one person tell you one thing about the film. The revelation that comes in the first act is so eerie that to see the film and know it's coming is to destroy much of its power.

FOR THOSE OF YOU too damned impatient to wait, here's the full spoiler right now. Nada, a homeless construction worker who believes in no one but himself and an abstraction called "America," is steered by co-worker Frank towards a soup kitchen/poor camp straight out of *The Grapes of Wrath*. But camp authorities are hiding more than old soup, and pirate TV hackers are flooding local airwaves with anti-government paranoia. Then all hell erupts when LAPD stormtroopers smash the camp and everyone in it—and this is a film made in 1989, two years before the L.A. rebellion.

Nada escapes and returns to find the hidden prize: high-tech sunglasses which reveal the real world as Dante's metropolis, a giant slave-pen of subliminal mind-control messages

emblazoned on every magazine, book and billboard: Do Not Question Authority, Doubt Humanity, Watch TV, Submit. A dollar bill reads "This Is Your God." Nada finally sees



the enemy: well-dressed corpses—aliens infesting and controlling Earth, manipulating our politics, our economy and even our environment, creating smog and destroying the ozone layer to make Earth more like their hellish homeworld. In one

of the most politically chilling lines of the film (especially in our age of mass firings called "downsizing" and "outsourcing"), someone realizes "Earth is their third world."

WHICH ISN'T TO SAY *They Live*

isn't fun. In fact, it's a hell of a lot funnier than *The Matrix*, but even its levity is symbolic of something larger. Nada has to convince his friend Frank to try the glasses on for himself, and Frank refuses absolutely. So they fight for five minutes in a wrestling match so entertaining it can go fist-to-foot with anything the Wachowskis ever came up with—and yet the scene also works as a hilarious metaphor for the Herculean effort required to effect a paradigm shift in someone else's consciousness.

Bottom line: *They Live* is not just visually groundbreaking; it also delivers real bang for its buck, with excellent performances and some of the best lines in science fiction film history. So if you felt burned by the *Matrix* sequels or you're just mad as hell at NAFTA, the World Trade Organization and the so-called War on Terror, see *They Live*. ●

THEY LIVE

Written and directed by John Carpenter • Starring "Rowdy" Roddy Piper, Keith David and Meg Foster • Now on video

Things to do in Tokyo when you're dead

A dying bureaucrat finds last-minute meaning in life in tough-minded *Ikiru*

BY JOSEF BRAUN

At the heart of Akira Kurosawa's beloved film *Ikiru* is a stomach. It's the first thing we see in fact, in the opening shot of an X-ray that reveals a fatal speck that will kill its unfortunate bearer in a matter of months, though he doesn't yet know it. First we see the stomach, then the man, who is himself little more than a speck perched on a chair and engulfed in a similar void, one of endless stacks of paperwork. Irreverently, an anonymous voice tells us that we're not even to bother with that guy: even though he's the hero of our story, he's not very interesting yet—he's barely even alive.

Ikiru translates as "to live" and it's the story of a widower civil servant named Watanabe (played by Takashi Shimura) who only rediscovers how to live his life with some sense of meaning and richness after he's been told he's going to die. "Man finds truth in misfortune," says a young novelist Watanabe encounters in a dimly lit tavern, and, though it's celebrated as one of the director's most gentle films, *Ikiru* is a film of much profound truth—but truth of a cold, harsh variety.

Watanabe knows he's going to die, but doesn't tell his co-workers or his son or daughter-in-law, which makes the audience the only ones privy to his secret. This familiar narrative device is key to Watanabe's journey: there are a number of reasons why someone might choose not to share their death with others and

Luis Buñuel

Continued from page 41

ants to quell any potential resistance. We first meet El Bruto (played brilliantly by the great Mexican actor Pedro Armendáriz) at the slaughterhouse where he works, and what he immediately see of him reveals his good humour, naïveté and, in his unquestioning response to Don Andrés's proposition, his undying loyalty to authority. Don Andrés offers El Bruto lodging in his house and day work in his butcher's shop, where Bruto works alongside Don Andrés's bold, strikingly beautiful and much younger wife Paloma (played with sexy intensity by Katy Jurado) who takes a dangerous liking to the Herculean muscle for hire. After El Bruto's intimidation tactics work all too well on the tenants, Paloma seems all the more determined to rein this savage animal in, not realizing that underneath that great hairy chest is a heart searching for meaning and desperate for tenderness. Don Andrés, Paloma and the tenants themselves each begin to occupy conflicting cor-

we're not entirely sure which are Watanabe's, but what's important is that his solitude and the panicked, aimless wandering it inspires allow him to find something to live for. Watanabe tries to enjoy a wild night out with the novelist (and even if he doesn't really have fun, we sure do as we watch him in the nightclubs and burlesque shows), then rediscovers the sweet feeling of becoming close to another person (though, that person being a young, somewhat frivolous girl, that closeness comes to feel inappropriate). Ultimately, Watanabe discovers that



Takashi Shimura (centre) in *ikiru*

REVUE CLASSIC

the best thing he can do with his remaining time is to devote himself to doing what in 30 years as a civil servant he's never done: serve civilians, by pushing through a project to turn a city dump into a children's playground.

BY THE FILM'S LONG FINAL ACT, Watanabe is dead (though his presence lingers) and *Ikiru* gradually reveals its more despairing centre. Watanabe's story is one of redemption, yet his co-workers, who drunkenly deify Watanabe for his efforts during his funeral and unanimously resolve to follow his example, seem unlikely to carry the torch—their enthusiasm all but trickles away with the next morning's sobriety. Kurosawa's mistrust of modern bureaucracy and power washes *Ikiru*'s final frames in all-too-convincing gloom.

But if the social aspect of *Ikiru*,

ners of El Bruto's heart and the confusion plaguing his fragile psyche gives way to a tragedy that owes much to Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* in both its themes and morality.

El Bruto is rife with compelling, tautly staged and edited sequences (such as a nocturnal street chase) and ominous, funny images (such as that burning meat that engulfs the camera as *El Bruto* and Paloma tumble into his makeshift bed in a warehouse near the docks). The film benefits greatly from its lead performances, each of which are pitched perfectly in terms of heightened realism. Armendáriz and Jurado both enjoyed success in the U.S. as well as Mexico (Jurado, who was once married to Ernest Borgnine, even took home an Oscar for her work in the Spencer Tracy duster *Broken Lance*) and radiate a carnal energy struggling against an encroaching darkness that will leave no one unsatisfied.

As well as *El Bruto*, Metro Cinema is screening another Buñuel Mexican classic, *Él* (also 1952), which is often given the English title *This Strange Passion*, though *Él* basically just means "he." Far more in keeping with Buñuel's

which was Kurosawa's first writing collaboration with Hideo Oguni (who would co-author other Kurosawa social films like *High and Low*, *I Live in Fear* and *The Bad Sleep Well*), is a somber one, what really clings to you after the film is over is the tenderness and strength of Shimura's performance. One of the finest film actors ever, Shimura was in 23 of Kurosawa's films, but most often in the shadow of the more theatrical Toshiro Mifune. Shimura was able to really shine in *Ikiru*, to fill whole scenes with his comically weary eyes and deep voice, to lead us to a new place over the film's leisurely running time. He was an actor whose presence was so great that even after Watanabe is gone, the mere sight of Shimura's face in the still photo that hangs over the funeral haunts not just his guilty co-workers, but all of us as well. ●

DETRU

Directed by Akira Kurosawa • Written by
Shinobu Hashimoto, Hideo Oguni and
Akira Kurosawa • Starring Takashi Shimura
• Zeidler Hall, The Citadel • Fri-Mon, Nov
14-17 (7pm) • Metro Cinema • 425-9212

typically perverse (anti-) Freudian streak, the film is a study of one man's jealousy and paranoia run rampant—or at least Buñuel would describe it as such. Others see his deconstruction of his protagonist's troubled psyche as a comment on the crippling effects of bourgeois culture (though Buñuel rarely confessed to distinct political agendas). I haven't seen *El* but it has so much going for it, including another script co-written by Alconiza and photography by the legendary Gabriel Figueroa, that I wouldn't hesitate to recommend the film to the predisposed. ⑤

EL BRUTO

Directed by Luis Buñuel • Written by Luis Buñuel and Luis Alcoriza • Starring Pedro Armendáriz, Katy Jurado and Andrés Soler • Zeidler Hall, The Citadel • Sat, Nov 15 and Mon, Nov 17 (9:30pm) • Metro Cinema • 425-9212

ÉL (THIS STRANGE PASSION)

Directed by Luis Buñuel • Written by Luis Buñuel and Luis Alcoriza • Starring Arturo de Córdova and Delia Garcés • Metro Cinema • Fri, Nov 14 and Sun, Nov 16 (9:30pm) • Metro Cinema • 425-9212

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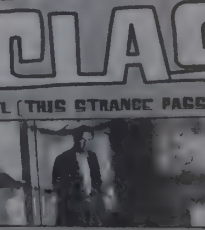
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FILM WEEKLY

NEW THIS WEEK

All That Heaven Allows (EFS) Jane Wyman and Rock Hudson star in *Immortal of Life* director Douglas Sirk's subtly subversive 1955 soap opera about a middle-aged widow whose romance with her younger gardener jeopardizes her standing among her snobbish suburban neighbours. Provincial Museum Auditorium (102 Ave & 128 St); Mon, Nov 17 (8pm)

Casa de los Babys (CA) Maggie Gyllenhaal, Daryl Hannah, Mária Gay Harden, Susan Lynch, Mary Steenburgen and Lili Taylor star in *Sunshine State* writer/director John Sayles's drama about six childless American women whose adoption plans hit a snag when they arrive at the Latin American orphanage where they've arranged to pick up their babies.

Ikiru (M) Takashi Shimura stars in *Seven Samurai* director Akira Kurosawa's 1952 humanist masterpiece about a lonely middle-aged government functionary who makes a heroic, last-ditch effort to give his life meaning when he is diagnosed with terminal cancer. In Japanese with English subtitles. Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri-Mon, Nov 14-17 (7pm)

Looney Tunes: Back in Action (CO, PG) Brendan Fraser and Jenna Elfman star alongside dozens of beloved Warner Brothers cartoon characters in *Gremlins* director Joe Dante's globe-hopping blend of animation and live action, in which Bugs Bunny hooks up with a former Hollywood stuntman to track down a legendary lost gemstone.

Luis Buñuel Series (M) Two films from the great surrealist director's so-called "Mexican" period: the 1952 satire of bourgeois marriage *El* (*This Strange Passion*) (Fri, Nov 14 and Sun, Nov 16, 9:30pm); and, also from 1952, the tale of love and greed in a Mexico City apartment building *El Bruto* (Sat, Nov 15 and Mon, Nov 17 at 9:30pm). In Spanish with English subtitles. Zeidler Hall, The Citadel

Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World (CO, PG) Russell Crowe and Paul Bettany star in *Witness* director Peter Weir's water-logged adventure yarn, based on the novels of Patrick O'Brian, in which 19th-century British sea captain Jack Aubrey and ship surgeon Stephen Maturin brave storms and cannonfire as they pursue a French "super-frigate" from Cape Horn

to the Galapagos Islands.

Pot Luck (P) Frank Adonis, Theo Kogan, Jason Isaacs and Tommy Chong star in director Alison E.G. Thompson's stoner comedy about a low-level mobster whose worldview is turned upside-down when he comes into contact with a gorgeous punk rocker and a suitcase full of high-quality marijuana.

FIRST-RUN MOVIES

Brother Bear (CO, FP) The voices of Joaquin Phoenix, Rick Moranis and Dave Thomas are featured in this Disney animated adventure about a vengeful native hunter who learns some valuable lessons about life and nature when he is magically transformed into a bear. Songs by Phil Collins.

Elf (CO, FP) Will Ferrell, James Caan and Zoëy Deschanel star in *Swingers* director Jon Favreau's fish-out-of-water holiday comedy about a human man who was raised as an elf at the North Pole and who now travels to New York City hoping to locate his biological father.

Good Boy! (FP) Liam Aiken and the voices of Matthew Broderick, Megan Mullally and Brittany Murphy are featured in writer/director John Hoffman's kiddie comedy about a boy who learns that dogs are in fact reconnaissance agents for a future alien invasion of Earth.

The Human Stain (CA) Anthony Hopkins, Nicole Kidman and Ed Harris star in *Nobody's Fool* director Robert Benton's film version of Philip Roth's novel about a classics professor whose life of deception slowly unravels when he embarks upon a relationship with a much younger woman after getting fired for allegedly uttering a racial slur in his classroom.

In the Cut (CO, FP) Meg Ryan, Mark Ruffalo and Jennifer Jason Leigh star in *The Piano* director Jane Campion's film version of Susanna Moore's sexually charged novel, about a New York writing professor who enters a dangerous but powerfully erotic affair with a police officer investigating the brutal murder of a young woman in her neighbourhood.

Intolerable Cruelty (CO) George Clooney and Catherine Zeta-Jones star in *The Big Lebowski* director Joel Coen's screwball comedy about a Beverly

Hills divorcée who decides to get revenge on the slick attorney who cheated her out of her settlement by seducing him, marrying him and taking him to the cleaners in the subsequent divorce.

Kill Bill: Volume 1 (CO, FP) Uma Thurman, Lucy Liu, Daryl Hannah and Vivica A. Fox star in the first installment of *Pulp Fiction* writer/director Quentin Tarantino's ultraviolent homage to '70s exploitation flicks, about a vengeful female assassin who miraculously survives her employer's attempt to rub her out, and begins methodically picking off her killers, one by one.

Love Actually (CO, FP) Hugh Grant, Liam Neeson, Emma Thompson, Alan Rickman, Keira Knightley, Colin Firth and Laura Linney star in writer/director Richard Curtis's all-star ensemble romantic comedy, which tells eight interlocking stories about various Londoners (including the prime minister of England) falling in and out of love during the Christmas season.

The Matrix: Revolutions (CO, FP) Keanu Reeves, Carrie-Anne Moss, Laurence Fishburne and Hugo Weaving star in the final installment of directors Andy and Larry Wachowski's groundbreaking sci-fi trilogy about a rebel army's life-or-death battle against the machines that have enslaved most of mankind within a computer-generated virtual world.

Mystic River (CO, FP) Sean Penn, Kevin Bacon and Tim Robbins star in *Unforgiven* director Clint Eastwood's moody drama, set in working-class Boston, about three childhood friends whose traumatic memories of the past are revived when one, now a police detective, begins to suspect another of killing the third's daughter. Based on the novel by Dennis Lehane.

Radio (CO) Cuba Gooding Jr., Ed Harris, Alfre Woodard and Debra Winger star in *Summer Catch* director Mike Tollin's inspirational sports drama about the relationship between a small-town South Carolina football coach and the illiterate, mentally challenged man he adopts as his unlikely protégé.

Runaway Jury (CO) Dustin Hoffman, Gene Hackman, John Cusack and Rachel Weisz star in *Kiss the Girls* director Gary Fleder's big-screen version of John Grisham's legal thriller about a juror on a landmark case against a gun manufacturer who attempts to blackmail the two competing



attorneys to paying him to persuade the other jurors to decide in their favour.

Scary Movie 3 (CO, FP) Anna Faris, Charlie Sheen, Leslie Nielsen, Queen Latifah and Denise Richards star in the latest installment of the popular series of raunchy horror-movie spoofs, featuring send-ups of such films as *The Ring*, *The Others*, *The Matrix* and *Signs*. Directed by David Zucker (*The Naked Gun*).

The School of Rock (CO, FP) Jack Black, Joan Cusack and Mike White (who wrote the screenplay) star in *Dazed and Confused* director Richard Linklater's comedy about a would-be rock star who takes a job as a substitute teacher at an uppity private school and immediately begins transforming his classroom of 10-year-olds into a kick-ass rock band.

The Station Agent (P) Peter Dinklage, Bobby Cannavale, Patricia Clarkson and Michelle Williams star in writer/director Tom McCarthy's Sundance Festival prize-winner about a moody dwarf whose solitary existence is gradually invaded by the quirky inhabitants of the small New Jersey town he's just relocated to.

The Texas Chainsaw Massacre (CO, FP) Jessica Biel, Andrew Bryniarski, Erica Leerhsen and R. Lee Ermy star in director

Marcus Nispel's intense remake of Tobe Hooper's 1974 splatter masterpiece about a vanguard of teens on their way to Mexico who get waylaid in a remote Texas town by a family of homicidal maniacs.

Under the Tuscan Sun (FP) Diane Lane, Raoul Bova and Sandra Oh star in *Guinevere* writer/director Audrey Wells's romantic comedy, based on the memoir by Frances Mayes, about a harried American lawyer who decides to quit her job and start her life over by relocating to a derelict villa in Tuscany.

Underworld (FP) Kate Beckinsale and Scott Speedman star in director Len Wiseman's stylish supernatural thriller about a beautiful female vampire and werewolf-hunter who has a *Romeo and Juliet*-style love affair with a human whose unique blood type could save the werewolf race from extinction.

LEGEND

CO: Cineplex Odeon, 444-5468
EFS: Edmonton Film Society, 439-5285
FP: Famous Players
GA: Garneau Theatre, 433-0728
L: Leduc Cinema, 986-2728
M: Metro Cinema, 425-9212
P: Princess Theatre, 433-0728

GARNEAU theatre
8712 - 109 Street - 433-0728

CASA DE LOS BABYS
Nightly 7:00 & 9:00 pm
Sat & Sun Matinee 2:00 pm
PG (coarse language)

PRINCESS THEATRE
10337 - Whyte Ave. - 433-0728

POTLUCK
Nightly 7:15 & 9:15 pm
Sat & Sun Matinee 2:00 pm
14A (coarse language, substance abuse)

PRINCESS THEATRE
10337 - Whyte Ave. - 433-0728

THE STATION AGENT
Nightly 7:00pm
Sat & Sun Matinee 1:00 pm
14A (coarse language)

THE HUMAN STAIN
Nightly 9:00 pm
Sat & Sun Matinee 3:00 pm
14A (coarse language, mature themes)

fall into

EDMONTON YOGA STUDIO

Hatha Iyengar Ashtanga
tel 451.8131
12039 - 127 Street
edmontonyogastudio@shaw.ca

FILM LISTINGS

Showtimes for Friday, November 14 to Thursday, November 20

All showtimes are subject to change at any time. Please contact theatre for confirmation.

CLAREVIEW

8712-109 St. 433-9728

CASA DE LOS BABYS 14A
Coarse language. Daily 7:00 9:00 Sat Sun 2:00

PRINCESS

10337-82 Ave. 433-0728

POT LUCK 14A
Coarse language, substance abuse. Daily 7:15 9:15 Sat Sun 2:00

THE STATION AGENT 14A
Daily 7:00 Sat Sun 1:00

THE HUMAN STAIN 14A
Coarse language, mature themes. Daily 9:00 Sat Sun 3:00

METRO CINEMA

9828-101A Ave, Citadel Theatre, 425-9212

IKIRU Fr-Mon 7:00

EL (THIS STRANGE PASSION) STC
Fr Sun 9:30

EL BRUTO STC
Sat Mon 9:30

GERALD L'ECUYER: A FILMMAKER'S JOURNEY STC
Thu 7pm

GRANDIN THEATRE

Grandin Mall, Sir Winston Churchill Ave, St. Albert, 458-9822

ELF G
Daily 7:10 9:10 Sat Sun 12:30 2:30 4:30

LOONEY TUNES: BACK IN ACTION G
Daily 7:00 Sat Sun 12:40 2:40 4:40

BROTHER BEAR G
Daily 6:30 8:30 Sat Sun 12:15 2:10 4:00

SCARY MOVIE 3 14A
Crude content. Daily 9:00

THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 14A
Violent. Daily 6:50 9:20 Sat Sun 12:50 3:40

MASTER AND COMMANDER: THE FAR SIDE OF THE WORLD 14A
Violence. Daily 6:45 9:30 Sat Sun 1:00 3:45

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4762-50 St. 966-2728

LOONEY TUNES: BACK IN ACTION G
Daily 7:10 9:10 Sat Sun 12:30 2:30 4:30

BROTHER BEAR G
Daily 7:00 9:00 Sat Sun Mon Tue 1:00 3:20

THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 14A
Violent. Daily 8:30

ELF G
Daily 7:15 9:20 Sat Sun Mon Tue 1:20 3:30

MASTER AND COMMANDER: THE FAR SIDE OF THE WORLD 14A
Violence. Daily 7:00 9:40 Sat Sun 1:00 3:40

WETASKIWIN CINEMAS

(1) 780-352-3922

THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 14A
Violent. Daily 9:00

LOONEY TUNES: BACK IN ACTION G
Daily 7:00 Sat Sun 1:00 3:00

CINEPLEX ODLON CINEMAS

CINEMA GUIDE

CITY CENTRE

10200-102 Ave. 421-7020

KILL BILL: VOLUME I 18A
Gory violence. Daily 4:10 7:15 10:10

MYSTIC RIVER 14A
Coarse language. Daily 12:20 9:15

RUNAWAY JURY PG
Violence. Daily 3:20 6:35

SCARY MOVIE 3 14A
Crude content. Daily 1:10 3:50 7:30 10:20

RADIO PG
Daily 1:20

THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 14A
Violence. No passes. Daily 12:40 1:30 3:40 5:00 6:40 8:30 9:45

ELF G
No passes. Daily 12:50 3:00 5:10 7:20 9:50

MASTER AND COMMANDER: THE FAR SIDE OF THE WORLD 14A
Violence. No passes. Daily 12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30

LOONEY TUNES: BACK IN ACTION G
Daily 12:15 2:30 4:45 6:50 9:00

WEST MALL 8

8882-170 St. 444-1829

AMERICAN WEDDING 18A
Crude content. Fri Mon-Thru 6:45 9:00 Sat-Sun 2:00 4:40 6:45 9:00

SEABISCUIT PG
Some coarse language. Fri Mon-Thru 6:30 9:20 Sat-Sun 2:20 6:30 9:20

ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO 14A
Graphic violence. Fri Mon-Thru 7:30 9:40 Sat-Sun 2:15 4:35 7:30 9:40

LOST IN TRANSLATION 14A
Fr Mon-Thru 6:40 8:55 Sat-Sun 1:55 4:10 6:40 8:55

TERMINATOR 14A
Mature themes. Fr Mon-Thru 7:10 9:30 Sat Sun 2:10 4:40 7:10 9:30

THE RUNDOWN 14A
Fr Mon-Thru 6:50 9:10 Sat-Sun 2:05 4:30 6:50 9:10

UNDERWORLD 18A
Gory violence. Fr Mon-Thru 7:00 9:35 Sat-Sun 1:50 4:25 7:00 9:35

SYLVIA 14A
Sexual content, coarse language. Fr Mon-Thru 7:20 9:45 Sat-Sun 1:45 4:05 7:20 9:45

CLAREVIEW

4211-139 Ave. 472-7600

THE SCHOOL OF ROCK PG
Daily 1:40 4:10 6:50 9:10

RUNAWAY JURY PG
Violence. Daily 7:15

THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE 18A
Gory violence. Daily 1:30 3:50 10:10

SCARY MOVIE 3 14A
Crude content. Daily 12:50 2:50 5:00 7:30 9:35

RADIO PG
Daily 9:50

BROTHER BEAR G
Daily 1:10 3:20 5:20 7:20 9:25

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LOONEY TUNES: BACK IN ACTION G
Daily 12:55 3:00 5:10 7:10 9:20

SOUTH EDMONTON COMMON

1525-99 St. 436-8585

INTOLERABLE CRUELTY PG
Coarse language. Daily 12:45 3:10 6:45 9:10

KILL BILL: VOLUME I 18A
Gory violence. Daily 2:10 5:10 7:50 10:45

RUNAWAY JURY PG
Violence. Daily 12:40 3:20 7:15 10:20

THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE 18A
Gory violence. Daily 5:30 8:15 10:45

RADIO PG
Daily 1:40 4:10 7:45 10:10

SCARY MOVIE 3 14A
Crude content. Daily 2:10 5:00 8:10

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The magnificent Seven ride again

David Silcox debunks the myths surrounding the Group of Seven

By AGNIESZKA MATEJKO

For some of us becoming a Canadian does not come quickly or naturally. I vividly recall my own immense efforts as a teenager to drop my Polish accent, master the right slang expressions and stop curtsying to my teachers, a habit which reliably made my classmates break out into uproarious laughter. Finally, after getting the hang of blending in with my Canadian peers on the outside, I began to ask the more difficult, inner question: "What does it mean to be a Canadian?"

It was around this time that a friend invited me over to her house, where I saw, hanging right in the centre of her living room, a large print of a marshy creek in the woods. She paused respectfully before it, as if it were an altar, and said, "This is by one

of the Group of Seven; they are the most important Canadian artists." Gazing at this tranquil image of swampy wilderness—so different from all of the paintings of Cossacks, dancing peasants and idyllic rural villages that my own house was filled with—I realized that in this painting lay a large part of the answer to my question. Nowhere else but in Canada could paintings of wild, misshapen, windblown pine trees and remote marshes become icons of nationhood.

Now I understood that to be Canadian meant to love nature not in its tamed and pruned version, but in all of its alarming and feral wildness.

HAVING WEANED my own sense Canadian identity on the Group of Seven's exploits in the wilds of untamed land, it was a startling experience to read David Silcox's new book *The Group of Seven and Tom Thomson*—the most comprehensive book ever published on the subject. Silcox presents these 11 artists (the membership of the group can be confusing, as it grew over time and includes Tom Thomson who died tragically before the official

formation) from an entirely new angle. "The Group of Seven developed their own mythology," Silcox explains. "Now we realize that we don't need all that whole malarkey; the work can stand on its own."

As the group strove with missionary zeal to develop uniquely Canadian

some of the members never even left Ontario. "It's like scaffolding that they invented," Silcox says. "Now we can take the scaffolding down."

Silcox's selection of prints of more than 100 never-before-published images and little-known paintings reinforces his new vision of the

have so readily come to associate with the group are replaced by the repugnant brown hues of muddy trenches, occasionally streaked by cadmium red blood of dying soldiers.

Have I (along with a few million other Canadians) gotten it all wrong? Have we collectively romanticized the

PROFILE VISUAL ARTS



Lismer, *Pine Tree and Rocks* (1921)



Varley, *The Sunken Road* (1915)

an painting, they indulged in creating myths around themselves, proclaiming that they were viciously attacked by critics, fighting against a hostile or indifferent public as they explored the country from coast to coast, braving its remote wilderness areas. According to Silcox's research none of these claims were entirely true; indeed,

group's oeuvre. "Their sense of geography was an important part of it," he says, "but it wasn't the only important part." To show this less familiar (and less mythologized) aspect of their work, Silcox devotes large sections of his book to portraiture, urban scenes and images from the war. There are depictions of the poverty-ridden slums of Halifax painted with harsh, unequivocal eloquence by Lawren Harris and stark depictions of the logging industry. "They had a strong sense of documenting Canada before it disappeared," Silcox says.

BUT BY FAR the most shocking pieces are Varley's and Jackson's portrayals of the First World War—both were hired to paint the war as a part of the Canadian War Memorials program, but Jackson was the only one to actually fight. In these paintings the vibrant colours of untamed nature that we

Group of Seven? As Silcox amply proves, yes, we did; our images of lone artists standing on the edges of a vast wilderness are exaggerated. The work the Group of Seven produced was more urban and urbane than the myth that has been handed down to us. And yet, all those images of desolate marshy creeks and forbidding Arctic hills are part of the group's heritage too. In fact, as Silcox explains, already by the 1920s the government of Canada became worried that the group would discourage immigration by portraying Canada as a wild, uninhabited land.

In the end, what matters most is that the group created what Silcox refers to as "the visual equivalent of the national anthem." ☉

THE GROUP OF SEVEN AND TOM THOMSON

By David Silcox • Firefly Books • 448 pp. • \$85

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The Dream Life of strangers



Chris Craddock and Jonathan Christenson hope to wake up audiences with their first collaboration

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

When Catalyst Theatre announced they would be kicking off their 2003/2004 season with a co-production with Azimuth Theatre called *Dream Life*, the project sounded like an unlikely but intriguing Felix-and-Oscar shacking-up of two of Edmonton's most distinctive theatre artists: Catalyst artistic director Jonathan Christenson, famed for his work on meticulously staged, dreamlike, long-gestating shows like *The Blue Orphan* and *The House of Pootsie Plunket*; and Azimuth artistic director Chris Craddock, who brings a looser, improv-influenced style to shows ranging from raucous, pop culture-savvy comedies like *On Being a Peon* and *Boy Groove* to more introspective seriocomic monologues like *Moving Along* and *Hal*.

But as I watch the tail end of one of Christenson and Craddock's rehearsals, it's obvious that the two artists are very much in sync as they prepare their first project together. Craddock has reached a key point in his script, in which he plays (among several other characters) a sort of alternate version of himself, a struggling actor who acquires the ability not just to read other people's minds, but also to make subtle adjustments in their brain chemistry to remove addictions and harmful thought patterns. In the scene he and Christenson are working on, a drug addict that Craddock has "healed" shows up on his doorstep, asking him to do the same favour for his girlfriend. It's fascinating to watch Craddock and Christenson's two approaches blending together—Craddock honing his conversational performance style, while Christenson subtly choreographs his body language and the interplay between Craddock's words, the sound effects and the music score.

"Doing this show, I've learned a lot about what's possible [in theatre]," Craddock tells me after he and Christenson break for dinner and the three of us decamp to a booth in the Next Act. "I think my shows have been tight enough in terms of performance and language and things like that, but in terms of the raw craft that Jonathan brings to it, and marrying sound to light to projection and the help he's given with my performance—it's been a fantastic experience, for sure."

Craddock and Christenson had crossed paths professionally a couple of times in the past—Craddock's written a couple of short plays for Catalyst's annual fundraiser *Over the Edge With 4-Play*, and he wrote and performed a lovely, poetic monologue for the unique, Sterling Award-winning anthology show *Fusion 2001: Let There Be Light*—but *Dream Life* is the

first time the two men have actively worked together on the same project. "It seemed like an interesting marriage," Christenson says. "And the fact that, as artistic directors of our own companies, we were both creating our own work already meant that it wouldn't be about 'We need more time, we've got to find more money in the budget, we've got to line up more grants.' Of course, I always kid myself that something's going to make financial sense, but it never, ever makes any kind of financial sense to do theatre. Really, for me, this show is about my being at a point in my career where I want to be shaken up and work with people who push me in a way that makes me have to break out of some of my old givens. And Chris's work has a looseness to it that makes him a good person to do

PREVIEW THEATRE

that for me. Plus, I think he's brilliant—I think he's going to be a significant voice in Canadian theatre."

Craddock looks simultaneously embarrassed and flattered at this comment, and so I ask him, "You buy this 'significant voice in Canadian theatre' jazz?"

It's an impossible question, but Craddock handles it gracefully. "Hey, I'm not going to try and put anything past anybody," he says. "But I'd like to think that maybe I could do that. I've got a lot of good years left. Maybe I'll get better—you never know."

CERTAINLY, in terms of talent, energy and ambition, there aren't any playwrights of Craddock's generation in Alberta who can touch him. He burst onto the scene in 1996 with most of his talents already fully formed: his one-man show *SuperEd* was fresh, funny and fast-moving, sure, but it also had an unpretentious emotional honesty that audiences immediately connected with. It was easy to tell that Craddock's character Ed was wrestling with the same issues that meant the most to Craddock himself: how do you be a good person? If you don't believe in religion, what do you believe in?

And yet, *SuperEd* was also completely free of the kind of whiny, fake-poetic angst that sinks so many plays from the NeXtFest generation—Craddock's bullshit detector is too finely tuned to fall into that trap. You never get the sense Craddock is pretending to be something he's not; his plays are always grounded in the perspective of a young guy walking the streets of Edmonton, having the same girlfriend problems and watching the same *Simpsons* reruns as you are. He's

a populist at heart; despite his excellent dramatic instincts, his images are more likely to be drawn from superhero comics or pop music than from the theatrical canon. (His show *On Being a Peon* was a hilariously irreverent account of his stint playing a tiny, spear-carrying role in a prestigious production of *Othello*. If the play is to be trusted, honouring the glories of Shakespeare were not exactly Craddock's top priority.)

Craddock was soon collaborating on shows with some of Edmonton's biggest theatre stars, writing the raunchy and hugely successful series of *Tanny Fringe* shows with Darrin Hagen and creating another Fringe hit, *Hal*, with Wes Borg. At the same time, he was penning a string of socially conscious plays for Azimuth Theatre aimed at high school audiences, three of which were eventually published together by NeWest Press in a collection called *Naked at School*. Azimuth continued to create social-action theatre and tour it to schools and native reservations when Craddock became the company's artistic director in 2001, but the shows Craddock began programming in Azimuth's tiny theatre on 106 Ave were sexy, satirical and obviously intended to create the impression of a youthful organization eager to shake things up. (The first production of the Craddock regime was a one-woman show starring Andrea House bearing the attention-getting title *Porn Star*.)

Craddock initially took a combative approach to running Azimuth, even writing a hotheaded letter to *SEE Magazine* in which he banned reviewer Dale Shekooley from attending future Azimuth shows after Shekooley wrote a review of *Porn Star* in which he complained that the newly renovated Azimuth space was cold and uncomfortable. (Craddock publicly apologized a week later.) And he's certainly never hidden his feelings from me, either, when he's been displeased with what I've written about his company or his plays. This is a guy, after all, who once authored a play, *The Critic*, all about two frustrated writers who kill off an all-powerful theatre reviewer.

But Craddock has definitely mellowed since those days (or maybe he's just gotten better at holding his tongue), and he's industriously turned Azimuth into a hub of activity for all sorts of emerging theatre artists—the girls of Panties Productions, the boys of Ribbit Productions and solo artists like *Dead Man Talking*'s Jeremy Baumung and *Metis Mutt*'s Sheldon Elter have all gained valuable exposure in Azimuth's

SEE NEXT PAGE

That touch of Ink

The sales pitch for mammoth Playworks Ink conference is hard to resist

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

I began talking with Ken Cameron, the executive director of the Alberta Playwrights Network, about **Playworks Ink**, the largest playwriting festival in western Canada, at 10 a.m. last Friday. He'd convinced me to register for the event by 10:15 and by 10:20 he was advising as to which Calgary hotels I should register at. Obviously, the guy is quite a salesman.

But Cameron would probably argue that Playworks, which runs from November 20 to 23 in Calgary, sells itself. Technically, this is Playworks' inaugural year, but in fact it's an amalgamation of two separate, long-running theatrical get-togethers. "We've partnered up this year with Theatre Alberta," he explains, "who for years have run an event called Dramaworks Calgary, which is a series of professional and amateur workshops in various aspects of theatre. And APN has been doing Fresh Ink

[principally a showcase for new Alberta plays], which has also been growing in popularity. And so we decided, especially since Theatre Alberta is our parent organization, how odd it was for us to be doing independently these very similar activities, especially since the funding comes from the very same source. Why not try to save money—and save work!—by combining the two?"

It's an unbeatable you-put-your-

PREVIEW EVENTS

chocolate-in-my-peanut-butter-style partnership. "Nowhere else in the country," Cameron proudly says, "will you find such a combination of educational workshops, panel discussions, showcase readings of new plays and speeches from well-known theatre professionals all in one place. And especially not all squeezed into four days."

The weekend's guests of honour are playwrights Joan MacLeod and Linda Griffiths, who will each be leading writing workshops, talking about their past work and giving sneak previews of new plays-in-progress. But featured just as prominently are emerging Edmontonian playwrights Beth Graham and Daniela Vlasakic (whose latest collaboration, *The Last*

Train, will get a staged reading on Saturday night) and Mark Stubbings (whose *Dust*, a dark-hued comedy about the funeral business, will be read on Friday). "What's really exciting about Playworks," Stubbings says, "is that not only is it going to be an opportunity not just for a number of theatre professionals to see the play, but also to go to another city and get other theatre audiences involved in it. And of course, it would be great if someone saw it and was taken enough by it to want to do it in a professional capacity. But that added exposure is great all by itself."

THAT'S EXPOSURE even Graham and Vlasakic could use a little of as well. "Beth and Daniela are so well-known in Edmonton as both actors and playwrights," Cameron says, "and we've never heard of them down here. And that's a crying, crying shame. Well, Daniela's acted down here in the past, so the real theatre fans might remember her from that, but we don't really know

her and Beth as playwrights. So the playwriting festival aspect of the event seeks to make connections between the two cities, as well as making connections between playwrights from across the country—to get Beth and Daniela talking to people like Joan and Linda who were sort of in the vanguard of female Canadian playwrights, or at least to put them in context next to one another. Before *The Last Train*, for instance, we're doing a live-on-stage, BBC-style interview with Linda Griffiths."

A similar Q&A session with Joan MacLeod will precede the reading of *Dust*, a prospect that particularly thrills Stubbings, who directed a few scenes from her play *Toronto, Mississippi* for a theatre class back when he was 18. Of course, as a penniless playwright, Stubbings is just as excited about attending the grant-writing workshop the following afternoon. I

hope he saves me a seat. ☉

A complete list of the many workshops, readings, panel discussions and special events at Playworks Ink—as well as information on how to register—can be found at www.theatreAlberta.com or by calling Theatre Alberta at 422-8162 (in Edmonton) or 1-888-422-8160 (elsewhere).



Dream Life

Continued from previous page

cramped but friendly confines. Last weekend, Azimuth hosted the Political Party, an evening of theatre, dancing and speechmaking from Liberal MLA Laurie Blakeman, all designed to get out the vote among the often-apathetic 18 to 30 demographic and specifically to raise awareness about the implications of Bill 43.

SEVEN YEARS AFTER *SuperEd*, Craddock has more than delivered on the promise of that show, but as *Dream Life* demonstrates, he hasn't stopped wrestling with the same questions of religion and faith, or trying to figure out how to live a moral life. "It's difficult," he says, "because I am from a very Christian background, but I really can't subscribe to fundamentalist Christianity. And it's difficult when you've got this huge part of your upbringing that you find yourself completely on the other side of politically. So once you're rejected that, how do you avoid being spiritually bereft? Once you poke holes in one belief system, how can you wholeheartedly embrace another belief system? That's been my struggle. Now, if you look at my earlier work, it was 'Fuck 'em. Fuck 'em all,' that's what I was saying. But I was always focussing on the politics of it—the religious right in the United States, the stuff that comes out of the Catholic Church in Rome, which is all terrible, terrible stuff. But on the other hand, [perhaps there's] a core of spirituality there that's valuable."

If that's so, I ask him, what are we to make of *Dream Life*, in which Craddock plays a character named "Chris Craddock" who goes around magically healing people? ("Chris"! It's only one letter away!) "Well," he says, "there is a Jesus thing going on,

for sure. I can understand if people draw that conclusion; I don't know if I want them to or not. But maybe if they do, it might make them think a little bit about the humanity of Jesus versus the deity of Jesus, because that's supposed to be what's great about him—that he felt pain and loss and betrayal."

"I think that Christianity is a rich source of mythical material for any artist," Christenson says. "I'm sure any Christian would take that as demeaning, but it isn't.... I think Jesus is a myth, a great myth, but one that expresses something profound about our own personal suffering, our desire to reach out in some bigger way toward others. If we did this with a Greek myth, all the intellectuals would simply accept it as a classical reference and have no problem with it. But with a Christian myth, it's so immediate, so many people grew up in that environment, it often gets misinterpreted as an attack on people's belief systems."

CRADDOCK SAYS one of the themes he wanted to explore in *Dream Life* was the idea that even though people tend to feel alone and isolated from each other, we're all pretty much the same underneath, all of us prey to the same mixture of positive and negative emotions. In a way, the play proves its own point by showing that Christenson and Craddock's creative styles aren't all that different—or at least that Christenson's fondness for inventing fantastic, lushly stylized worlds and Craddock's interest in the commonplace and everyday are more compatible than people might think. "I think what you see in the show is a blend of the two," Craddock says. "There's some day-to-day stuff in it, but there's also a strong element of fantasy life, of another world. But instead of it being a faraway land or a

long time ago, we're going inside, into people's inner lives."

You could even argue that Craddock's career path seems headed in much the same direction as Christenson's: toward more long-term personal projects with hand-picked collaborators. "I'd go so far as to say," Craddock says, "that I've never seen a production of a play of mine that I haven't been involved with that I've been altogether happy with. Or even happy with at all."

That's not ego; that's just the same feeling Christenson has that theatre tends to work best when all the artists involved have built the project up together. "I think that in theatre, to be uninterested in collaboration is self-defeating," Christenson says. "It's in your interest to find someone who you respect and work well with to collaborate on a project with from the beginning. Because otherwise, if you're a playwright, there'll come a point where you have to hand your script over to some director who you might not have any idea who they are, or designers who have no idea how you see the play.... And I just think the more we isolate ourselves and expect other people to create the finished product, the more fucked we are. But if you set out from the beginning to say, 'We're all in this together, so we might as well find people who we respect and who we enjoy working with,' and begin at the beginning, you're much more likely to end up with a product you're much happier with." He turns toward Craddock. "I mean, wouldn't you rather do that?" he asks.

Craddock hardly needs to answer. He's here, isn't he? ☉

DREAM LIFE

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RED ROOTS, BALLET AND BUBBLY Jubilee Auditorium (451-8000) • Shunka's fundraising gala featuring Shunka, Tara Birwhistle (Royal Winnipeg Ballet), Christopher Plummer (vocals), Vasyi Popadiuk (violin), Kryn Ballet, the Nomads, silent auction • Sat, Nov. 15 • 6:30pm (cocktails, 8pm (entertainment)) • \$100 • Tickets available at TicketMaster

SISTERS OF THE SAND Festival Place Theatre, Sherwood Park (473-4855) • Middle Eastern dance by German belly dancers, Beata and Horacio Cifuentes • Sat, Nov. 15 (8pm) • \$25 (adv)/\$30 (door)

GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

AGNES BUCHERA GALLERY 12310 Jasper Ave (482-854) • ABOUT COLOUR Featuring new artworks by Wayne Boucher, Caroline James and Deborah Worsfold • Until Nov. 21

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DOUGLAS UDELL GALLERY 10332-124 St (488-4445) • Paintings by Vivian Thierfelder; until Nov. 15 • Toronto International Art Fair; until Nov. 18 • Artworks by Abe Morel; Nov. 22-Dec. 6

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ELECTRUM DESIGN STUDIO 12419 Stony Plain Rd (482-1402) • Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 10am-4pm • 2003 REFLECTIVE SHOW: Landscapes by Myrna Harris, Jeff Collins, ceramics by Darwen Dolinsky, John Elder, Christian Barr; Paintings by James Trevelyan; glass works by James Lavoie; wash chugin by Terry O'Connor; gold and silver jewellery by Wayne Mackenzie, Janet Stein, John Blair, Peter McKay; wood boxes by John Morel, Henry Schlosser, Doug Haslam • Until Dec. 23

EXTENSION CENTRE GALLERY 2nd Fl University Extension Centre, 8303-112 St (492-3054) • Open Mon-Thu 8:30am-8pm; Fri 9:30am-4:30pm, Sat 9am-noon • VOICE Monoprints by P.J. (Pamela) Copeland • Until Nov. 19

FORT DOOR 10308-81 Ave (432-7535) • Open Mon-Wed 10am-6pm; Thu-Fri 10am-9pm; Sat 10am-6pm; Sun 12-5pm • Eskimo soapstone carvings (human, animal) by J. Ishuluaq, West Coast Indian and Eskimo silver and gold jewellery by P. Wintonick • Until Nov. 30

FRANCE GALLERY 8vmt 10516 Whyte Ave (424-0240) • Open Mon-Sat 9:30am-6pm • ANO'S JOURNEY Photographs and installation by Naomi Maithalingam • Until Nov. 30

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HARCOURT HOUSE 10215-112 St (426-4180) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 12-4pm • OFF YER HEAD II • Until Nov. 15 • Silent auction fundraiser: Nov. 25

(8pm) • \$10 • SOUTH OF SIXTY: Artworks by artists from the Yukon. Curated by the Yukon Arts Centre's Scott Marsden • Nov. 20-Dec. 20 • Opening reception: Nov. 20 (7:30-10pm)

JOHNSON GALLERY 7711-85 St (465-6171) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm; Sat 9am-5pm • Artworks by members of the Edmonton Art Club; until Nov. 15

LATITUDE 53 See What's Happening Downtown

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MICHAEL MULLER PUBLIC ART GALLERY 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Open 10am-6pm • MOTHER EARTH, FATHER SKY: Sculptures by Pat Strakowski, fabric art by Dorothy Clarke • Until Dec. 1

MUTTART CONSERVATORY 9626-96A St (496-8787) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm; Sat-Sun 11am-5:30pm • SCENES AND SUCH Artworks by the members of the Twin Brooks Art Club, in the Centre Court; until Nov. 19 • FALL IN THE FOOTHILLS Autumn in the Rockies, in the Show Pyramid; until Nov. 21

THE ORTONA GALLERY 9722-102 St (439-6943) • BY THE NUMBERS Completed anonymous paint by numbers paintings from early '50s to the present, featuring two new paint by numbers by Marlena Wyman and Jimmy Golden to be completed during the opening reception by the attending public • Nov. 14-30 (Sat, Sun noon-5pm) • Opening reception: Fri, Nov. 14 (8pm-midnight)

PITS GALLERY See What's Happening Downtown

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19 Perton Street, St. Albert (460-4310) • Open Tue-Sat 10-5pm; Thu 10am-5pm • METAMORPHOSIS: DOLLS JOURNIES A collaborative multimedia project between 10 artists • Until Nov. 22

PROVINCIAL MUSEUM OF ALBERTA 12845-102 Ave (453-9100) • Open Sun-Thu 9am-5pm, Fri 9am-9pm • Teddy Bears are Back: Dec. 6-Feb. 16, 2004

FORGED IN FIRE 19TH CENTURY FIREARMS IN ALBERTA Until Jan. 11 • BIG THINGS 2: Featuring large-scale sculptures by the artists of the North Edmonton Sculpture Workshop, until Apr. 30, 2004 • THE ROOKIE Photographs of Wayne Gretzky; until Jan. 14 • SYNCRUDE CANADA ABORIGINAL PEOPLES GALLERY: Spans 11,000 years and 500 generations, people of the past and present, recordings, film, lights, artifacts and more. Permanent exhibit • THE NATURAL HISTORY GALLERY • BUG ROOM: Live invertebrate display

Permanent exhibit • THE BIRD GALLERY Mounted birds Permanent exhibit • TREASURES OF THE EARTH: Geology collection. Permanent exhibit • WILD ALBERTA GALLERY Permanent exhibit • A TO Z AT THE MUSEUM: Every Sat (9am-11am): family-fun drop-in program

ROWLANDS AND COMPANY See What's Happening Downtown

SCOTT GALLERY 10411-124 St (488-3619) • Open

Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • RECENT WORK: New paintings by Douglas Haynes • NEW SMALL SCULPTURE: Steel sculptures by Peter Hide • Until Nov. 25

SEGHERS STUDIO GALLERY See What's Happening Downtown

SNAP GALLERY See What's Happening Downtown

SNOWBIRD GALLERY WEM, 8882-170 St (444-1024) • Work by J. Yardley-Jones and Gregg Johnson, acrylics by Jim Vest, pottery by Noburo Kubo and Jacqueline Stenberg

SPECTRUM ART GALLERY AND STUDIO 11745 Jasper Ave (482-6677) • Open daily 10am-6pm • Paintings by Christopher Lucas, Patricia Young, Bindgit Turner, Deanna Larson and David Phillips

STUDIO 321 See What's Happening Downtown

VAAA GALLERY 3rd Fl, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-7211) • UNBANNED: Silent art auction and fundraiser featuring artworks donated by Alberta artists; Nov. 15 (8pm); \$10 • SPUN MEDIA: Artworks made from handspun fibre by hand weavers, spinners and dyers of Alberta; Nov. 20-Dec. 20; opening reception: Nov. 20 (7:30-9:30pm)

VANDERLEEE GALLERY 10183-112 St (452-0286) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5:30pm • Paintings by Sam Lam and photographic works by Wesley Anderson • Until Nov. 27

WEST END GALLERY 12308 Jasper Ave (488-4892) • Still life and figurative paintings by Joanne Gauthier; until Nov. 21 • Still life acrylic paintings by Nixie Barton and Grant Leir; Nov. 22-Dec. 10

WORKS GALLERY See What's Happening Downtown

LITERARY

AUDREY'S BOOKS See What's Happening Downtown

BACKROOM VODKA BAR 10324-82 Ave, upstairs, www.ravingpoets.com • Open poetry stage and improv music by the Raving Poets Band • Every Tue (8pm) until Nov. 25 (8pm)

GREENWOODS' BOOKSHOPPE 7925-104 St (439-2005) • Reading by Brian Brennan • Thu, Nov. 20 (7:30pm)

LIVE COMEDY

THE COMEDY FACTORY 3414 Gateway Boulevard (469-4999) • Tim Koslo; Nov. 13-15 • Tommy Sault; Nov. 20-22

FARGO'S 10307-82 Ave (433-4526) • Fargo's Laugh-a-Lot Comedy • Every Sun

SPICES RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE Colborne, 99 St. 32 Ave (430-3663, ext. 21) • The Comedy Factory • Fri, Nov. 21 • \$45 (includes dinner buffet)/\$25 (show only)

THEATRE

AMADEUS See What's Happening Downtown

A BARD DAY'S KNIGHT "B" Scene Studios, 8212-104 St (433-8542/420-1757) • Presented by Sound and Fury Theatre • Scott Sharplin writes and directs this fast-paced comedy that combines the plays and poetry of William Shakespeare with the songs and anarchic spirit of the Beatles • Until Nov. 16; Tue-Sat (8pm). Pay-What-You-Can: Sun Matinee (2pm); Two-For-One Tue • \$14 (adults)/\$12 (student/senior) • Tickets available by phone at TIX on the Square

CHIMPFOPIE The New Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Long-form improvisational sketches performed by Rapid Fire Theatre's top improvisers • Every Sat (11pm) except last Sat of each month

CRY, THE BELOVED COUNTRY The King's University College, 915-30 St (465-3500, ext. 8020) • Presented by the King's Players Drama Troupe • A stage version of Alan Paton's classic 1948 novel about murder, prostitution and racial hatred in Johannesburg, South Africa • Nov. 19-22 (8pm); Nov. 21 matinee (10am) • \$10 (adults)/\$7 (senior/student/alumni) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

DI-NASTY Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave • Jeff Hadash, Stephanie Wolfe, Mark Weir, Josh Dean, Deanna Stewart and Leana Brausen celebrate the 13th season of Edmonton's legendary live improvised soap opera spoofing the '50s melodramas of Douglas Sirk and Grace Metalious • Every Monday (8pm)

DREAM LIFE Catalyst Theatre, 8529 Gateway Boulevard (431-1750) • Presented by Catalyst Theatre and Armagh Theatre • Jonathan Christensen directs Moving Actor/playwright Chris Craddock's new one-man show which takes place inside the mind of a man whose ability to hear the thoughts of those around him becomes a curse when those thoughts begin to take over his own • Nov. 13-30, Wed-Sun (8pm) • \$21 (adults)/\$16 (student/senior) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

GILLIAN'S ISLAND Jubileeville Dinner Theatre, WEAT (484-2424) • A 10th-anniversary revival of this parody of the '60s TV series Gilligan's Island about a crew of hapless sailors and their mismatched passengers who are washed ashore on a deserted tropical island during a violent storm • Until Jan. 25 • Tickets available by phone at 484-2424

THE INCREDIBLE ADVENTURES OF MARY JANE MOSQUITO See What's Happening Downtown

INDIANA BONES AND THE RETURN OF HERBERT SCHMELMUT Celestine Dinner Theatre, Oxy Entertainment Hotel, 13103 Fort Rd (448-9339) • Daredevil archaeologist Indiana Bones must save the day yet again when his archrival Helmut Schmelmutter reappears on the scene, once again bent on world domination. In this musical spoof of the Raiders of the Lost Ark series of adventure films • Until Jan. 31 (Sat 6:15pm, Sun 5:15pm) • \$43.95 (Wed, Thu, Sun)/\$49.95 (Fri, Sat)/\$20 (child 12 and under)/free (child under 2)

THE INNOCENTS La Cité Francophone, 8627 91 St (420-1757) • Presented by Leave it to Jane Theatre • Until Nov. 16 (8pm); Sun matinee (2pm) • \$18 (adults)/\$15 (student/senior/Equity) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

THE LOUD 'N' QUEER CABARET The 3rd Space, 11516-103 St (477-5955/420-1750) • Presented by Workshop West Theatre • Darrin Hagen and Kristy Harcourt host the 11th installment of the raucous annual collection of short plays, songs, poetry and miscellaneous, unclassifiable performances from members of Edmonton's gay, lesbian and transgendered community • Nov. 21-22 (8pm) • \$18 (adv), \$21 (door) • Tickets available at Workshop West, TIX on the Square

LOVE YOU FOREVER AND OTHER STORIES See What's Happening Downtown

PROVENCE The Roxy, 10708-124 St (453-2440) • Presented by Theatre Network • The latest play from master manonettist Ronnie Burckett (Tink's New Dress Street of Blood, Happy), about a mysterious figure trapped in a dusty old painting which, after centuries of being bought and sold over and over again, comes into the possession of the half-insane madam of a Viennese brothel • Until Nov. 23 • Tickets available at Roxy Theatre box office

ROCKIN' VEGAS Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Inn, 16615-109 Ave (483-4051) • A high-energy musical revue celebrating the music of Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, Liberace, Neil Diamond, Wayne Newton and other performers associated with Las Vegas • Until Feb. 22 • Tickets available at Mayfield Dinner Theatre box office

SKIRTS ON FIRE The Varscona Theatre (420-1757/433-3399, Voice box #2) • Presented by Teatro La Quindim • Julien Arnold, Leana Brausen, Cathy Derkach, Jeff Hadash, Sheri Somerville and Davina Stewart star in this revival of writer/director Stewart Lemelin's 2000 farce about a children's author who gets roped into an increasingly complicated literary hoax by a charming playboy • Until Nov. 22, Tue-Sat 8pm, Sat matinee 2pm • \$18 (adults)/\$15 (student/senior/Equity), Pay-What-You-Can: Tue evening and Sat matinee • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

SURVIVAL: THE IMPROVISATION GAME The Third Space, 11516-103 St (424-6304) • Live, competitive improvisational comedy with "an element of danger" • Nov. 14, 28 • \$5 • Tickets available at the door

THEATRESPORTS Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Presented by Rapid Fire Theatre • Teams of improvisers create sketches on the spot based on audience suggestions, and have the results evaluated by a team of heartless judges • Every Fri (11pm) • Tickets available by phone at 448-0695

THE VISIT Second Playing Space, Timco Centre for the Arts, 87 Ave, 112 St • Jonathan Stein directs a student production of Friedrich Dürrenmatt's black comedy about a fabulously wealthy woman who returns to the place of her birth and offers to bequeath the village or billion marks if they agree to kill the man who disgraced her and forced her to leave town 35 years earlier • Nov. 18-22 (8pm) • \$7/\$4 (Tue) • Tickets available at SU info desk U of A

COMING NEXT WEEK - NOV 20 ...

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free will astrology

By ROB BREZSNY

ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 18

The latest movie from Aries filmmaker Quentin Tarantino received mixed reviews. Commenting on *Kill Bill: Volume 1*, Roger Ebert and Richard Roeper raved, "It's amazing. Brilliant and stylized! Tarantino is at the top of his form." On the other hand, critic Mick LaSalle had this to say: "If this recycled, derivative nonsense is all this once-promising director has to offer after six years, it's sad." I predict you will provoke a similar range of reactions in the coming week, Aries. It's probably best if you don't put too much stock in either the people who regard you as a genius or those who think you're a crank. Just be satisfied to believe in yourself.

TAURUS Apr 20 - May 20

"Consumer brands are the new religion," reports the *Financial Times*. "People turn to them for meaning." The evidence? Instead of attending church on Sunday, many of the faithful swarm to Ikea. Countless couples exchange their marital vows at Disneyland. Bikers are buried in coffins bearing Harley-Davidson logos. Don't tell me you haven't been infected with this faux religion, Taurus; we all have. But I'm happy to announce that it's a perfect astrological moment for blas-

phemy and dissent. Renounce your worshipful attachment to brand names and products that are sapping your spiritual juice! Break the hold of your addiction now! Just say no to false gods!

GEMINI May 21 - June 20

I have just finished skimming Hiroyuki Nishigaki's surprising book *How to Good-Bye Depression: If You Constrict Anus 100 Times Everyday, Malarky? or Effective Way? Though I haven't had a chance to try out his simple and revolutionary approach to mental health, I feel confident about recommending it to you. It's time to take drastic, perhaps unconventional measures to disperse the funky moods that have plagued you recently. Regular butt-squeezing may be able to accomplish what no other therapy can. As one satisfied reader testified after achieving miracles with this technique: "Free your ass and your mind will follow."*

CANCER June 21 - July 22

Can you find a sensitive saint who'll cater to your desires for a whole day? Someone who is knowledgeable about what gives you pleasure, who would listen with supple curiosity to your stories, who would sing you songs and read you poems and describe to you in lyrical detail all your wonderful qualities? In other words, Cancerian, can you enlist the devotion of a love genius who would regard being of service to you as a holy privilege? The planets have rarely been better aligned for such a possibility. The entire universe is yearning to be more demonstrative in communicating its love for you.

LEO July 23 - Aug 22

The bumblebees seem to be aerodynamically unsound. Its body weight appears too

great for its wingspan. Indeed, if it were as big as an airplane, it would never get off the ground. Fortunately, it knows nothing of the laws of physics as they apply to machines, and therefore never suffers from self-doubt as it soars and darts. I suggest you make this creature your power animal in the coming weeks. You will need to accomplish small wonders that there are no theories to account for.

VIRGO Aug 23 - Sept 22

My reading of your astrological omens suggests that you are now standing before three doors. The word "scapegoat" is written on door number one. "Chameleon" is on door two and "weaver" on door three. What door do you in the next six days will determine whether you'll ultimately have a choice about which door you open. If you do succeed in winning that privilege, I advise you to pick the "weaver" door sometime after November 22. Selecting the "chameleon" door wouldn't be terrible, but it wouldn't be half as stimulating.

LIBRA Sept 23 - Oct 22

Recently I received a letter with testimony you might find helpful. "Hello, my name is Randall Xavier Ludwick," it began. "I am inspector number 23 for the Federal Commission on Amusement Park Safety. My main responsibility is to ensure that all 'You Must Be This Tall to Go on This Ride' signs are up to code. It's the perfect job for a major Libra like me. Since I can never make up my mind if left to my own devices, I decided to pursue a career that has rigid boundaries and also appeals to my sense of justice." Mr. Ludwick's approach to his indecisiveness might be worth imitating in the coming weeks, dear Libra. I suggest you put yourself in positions where you must adhere to crisply defined limits and rules.

(Thanks to Edgar Roberts for introducing me to Mr. Ludwick.)

SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21

You are fresh, radical and as free as you've ever been. Only the ripest truths interest you. No pretty lies can trick you and no super-hyped trivia can distract you. I believe you're ready, therefore, to commune with the axioms of healing chaos, lifted from the Whores of Goddess Scientists website at adriancairn.tripod.com. Here's a sample: "You are the hidden God. Wake up in the dream. Read between the lies. To question is the answer. The frontline is everywhere. There are no innocent bystanders. Truth is a three-edged sword. Practice infinite tolerance except for intolerance. Achieve strength through joy. Embrace your shadow. Change is stability. Creation never ends. Everything is verb. The way in is the way out. All things fomite at the time. The going is the goal. Today is the day!"

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21

Walk into the hills or woods and find a large rock jutting out of the earth in a place that makes you feel at home. Sit down on or next to that rock and let go of the tightly wound emotions you've been holding onto. Sob or sigh or babble until you achieve a spiritual orgasm that will clear your mind of all its gunk and free you to make the decision you've been postponing. Ever hereafter you will call this the Crying Rock, and you will go there whenever you need the kind of release that only a beloved natural power spot can facilitate.

CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 19

If a friend or companion is pregnant, buy her some lingerie. If people close to you

are depressed, take them to a karaoke bar and insist that they sing in public. If you're feeling cautious and superstitious, book a flight to an island paradise or learn to ride a motorcycle. If you're afraid you're running out of good ideas, start writing a booklet entitled "My Inexhaustible Supply of Good Ideas." Are you catching my drift, Capricorn? To capitalize on the odd opportunities fate will bring you this week, you should definitely not go with the flow.

AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 18

Many of you feel that you're only truly yourself if others see you as you want to be seen. But this week I suggest you try out a different perspective. It's hinted at by Suzan-Lori Parks in her play *Topdog/Underdog*: "Yr only yrself when no one's watching." Who are you when you're alone, Aquarius? Turn off your awareness of what everyone thinks about you. Listen only to the clues arising from your silent depths.

PISCES Feb 19 - Mar 20

Back in the days when I could afford employees, one of them dreamed up a witty ad campaign for my expanded audio horoscopes. The headline was "Rob Breznys's astrological advice is like Viagra for the soul!" A week after the first ads appeared, I got a letter from the lawyers of the pharmaceutical company that manufactures the real Viagra. "Cease and desist, using our trademarked brand name," it said, "or we will sue you ass." (I'm paraphrasing.) My campaign came to a dead stop, and I vowed never again to borrow a corporate fetish for my own marketing purposes. Carefully, then, I make the following announcement: what life brings you in the coming weeks will be like Viagra for your soul. ☺

DOWNTOWN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION www.edmontondowntown.com

GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL GALLERY 10186-106 St. (488-6174/808-5900) • Open Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm, Thu 10am-8pm (closed all holidays) • **MAIN GALLERY: NEW WORKS IN WOOD** Southern Alberta Woodworkers Society biennial exhibition, until Nov. 29 • **DISCOVERY GALLERY: HOLIDAY CELEBRATION OF CRAFT**, until Dec. 24

ARTSHAB STUDIO GALLERY 3rd Floor, Krol Building, 10217-106 St. (423-2966) • Open Thu 5-8pm or by appointment • Artists by Ryan Brown, Jeff Collins, Aaron Pederson, Tim Rechner, Paul Roberts, Gabriela Rosende, Greg Swain, Anna Saul, Eugene Uluad, and guests

EDMONTON ART GALLERY 2 St. Winton Churchill Sq. (423-6223) • Open Tue-Wed and Fri 10.30am-5pm, Thu 10.30am-8pm, Sat, Sun 11am-5pm. Closed Mon • **STORYBOARD** until Feb. 8 • **PUBLIC RELATIONS: CAROL CORDE** and Carl Beveling: *Trans-Image, Imaginative Images*. Global Visuals Video Lounge, until Nov. 30 • **THE OTHER LANDSCAPE**, until Feb. 15 • **ALL IN ONE DAY SUNDAY**, The Other Landscape, (1pm) Gallery Tours: (1.30, 2.30, 3.30pm) Tour of The Other Landscape, Sun. Nov. 16 • **CHILDREN'S GALLERY: BECOME**, Curated by Don Moar • \$12/\$10 (student/senior), \$5 (children 6-12)/free (members/children 5 and under)

GIORDANO GALLERY 10080 Jasper Ave. (429-5066) • Open Wed and Sat 12-4pm; anytime by appointment • **LIVE SHOW** 2017: Artists by Akiko Taniguchi, Alex Cameron, Ruby J. Mah and others • Until Nov. 19

GREAT WEST SADDLERY BUILDING 10137-104 St. 2 Fl. (463-2142) • Mon-Wed, Fri-Sat 11am-5pm, Thu 12-30 • 30pm • **ECAS 11TH ANNUAL EXHIBITION**, Artists by the Edmonton Contemporary Artists' Society • Until Nov. 26

LATITUDE 53 10248-106 St. (423-5353) • Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat noon-5pm • **PROJEK ROOM: BLU-9** • **ICMBLTS** Mixed media installation by Ilmor Whidden • **MAIN SPACE** • **UNIDENTIFIED GUESTS**: An ongoing collaborative work by Jean François Prost and Marie Suzanne Déléites • Nov. 14-Dec. 5

PITS GALLERY Boardwalk Mall, 10340-104 Ave., Lower Level, Suites 33-34 • Open 10am-5.30pm • **UTILE DEATHS**. A graphic narrative by Michael Joyal • Until Nov. 15 • **Closing party**, Nov. 15 (7pm-midnight), featuring music by Randy Smallman and DJ Soules

ROWLES AND COMPANY 10130-103 St. (426-4035) •

Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm; Sat Noon-5pm • Oil, acrylic and watercolour paintings and sculptures by a variety of Canadian artists • Until November • **ALTERNATIVE EXHIBITION SPACES** • **HOTEL MACDONALD**: Acrylic paintings by Steve Mitts • **OXFORD TOWER LOBBY**: Oil paintings by Audrey Mannmiller • **SCOTIA PLACE LOBBY**: Acrylic paintings by Elaine Tweedy • **THE BELL TOWER**: Paintings by Sheila Luck, Elaine Tweedy and Franca Alby-Arcott. Glass art by Daniel Vargas, Mark Gibeau and Marcia De Vicque • Until Nov. 29

SEGHERS STUDIO GALLERY 604A, 10030-107 St., Seventh Street Plaza, North Tower (423-6885) • Open Tue-Thu 5.30-9pm or by appointment • Artworks by David Seghers, Robert von Eschen, Eric Butterworth, Jeff Collins, Pamela How (Vibes), Neil McClelland and Jacqui Rohac

SNAP GALLERY 10137-104 St. (423-1492) • Open Tue-Sat (12-5pm) • **MAIN SPACE: DOMESTICITY** Printmaking artworks by Marjan Eggemont, Wendy Tokyali, Lori Dooday, Amy Schermerbach and Ryan McCourt, until Nov. 15 • **FLOOR TO CEILING**: Printmaking artworks by Mexican artist Alejandro Magallanes, Nov. 22-Dec. 7; opening reception Fri, Nov. 21 (7-9pm), artist in attendance

STUDIO 321 Rice Howard Way, 1100-108A St. (424-6746) • **THE FATHER-SON EXHIBIT** Mixed media artworks and sculptures • Nov. 15-16; Sat (1-4pm), Sun (1-4pm)

WORKS GALLERY Commerce Place, 10150 Jasper Ave. (426-2122) • Open: Mon-Fri 11.30am-5.30pm • **LUV CON: ALBION AND THE LUCKY DOG**, Mixed media works by Wilfred Koub • Until Nov. 21

CLUBS/LECTURES

THE HEALING POWER OF JOY Grant MacLellan College, City Centre Campus, Room 6-13, 106th Street Building (424-4754) • Keith Wommack talks on how the joy that spiritual understanding of God brings can transform anyone's life • Mon, Nov. 17 (7:30-9pm) • \$15

JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY Stanley Miller Library • Meeting, discussion on the topic "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Jane Austen Characters on Film" • Sat, Nov. 22 (2-4pm)

DISCUSSION OF THE LITTLE NETHERINGHAMS **CHURCH** • Edmonton Chapter of Commerce, 400, 10125-99 St. (426-4620) • Speaker Juan Rosario and Kirk Graham presents *Leasing or Purchasing A Vehicle for Business* • \$2 • Fri, Nov. 14 (6-8.30am)

LITERARY

AUDREY'S BOOKS 10702 Jasper Ave. (423-3487) • Mark Koub, The Alberta Beatnik, presents his new CD *Best*, an evening of performance poetry with musical accompaniment by Dale Ladouceur, Thu, Nov. 13 (7-30pm) • **Black Books Poetry Night**, Sue Sinclair reads from her new book of poems, *Mortal Arguments*, Ken Howe reads from his book, *Household Hints for the End of Time*, Fri, Nov. 14 (7-30pm) • **Speak Spanish**, Spanish book club meeting; first Fri each month (7pm) • An evening of fiction readings by Margaret Gunning, author of *Letter From Life*, Thomas Troluak, author of *The 52nd Poem*, and Caterina Edwards, author of *A White Shadow of Pale*, Wed, Nov. 19 (7-30pm) • **Book launch**, reading by Jonathan Locke Hart from his new book of poems *Dream Solstice*, Thu, Nov. 20 (7-30pm) • **Book launch** with George Melnyk and Tamara Seiler reading from their new collection about the people, landscapes and issues of Alberta, Fri, Nov. 21 (7-30pm)

QUEER LISTINGS

BOOTS AND SADDLES 10242-106 St. (423-5014) • Large tavern with pool tables, restaurant, shows. Members only

GAY AND LESBIAN COMMUNITY CENTRE OF EDMONTON (GLCCCE) Suite 45, 9916-106 St. (488-3234) • Open Mon-Fri, 1.30-5.30pm, 7-10pm • Support groups, library, youth group and discussion nights • **Women's Coming Out Group**: For adult women of all ages who are questioning their sexual orientation; free, pre-register; until Dec. 8

GAY MEN'S OUTREACH CIRC (GMOAC) 45, 9912-106 St. (488-0564) • **COMING OUT WORKSHOPS**: Concerned about coming out? Self-acceptance? Sexual health and HIV/AIDS? Homophobia vs. Feeling good about yourself? Finding community? Relationships? Free and confidential • Every Wed 7-10pm for 6 weeks • Until Nov. 19 • Pre education initiative for gay/bisexual men that works toward preventing the spread of HIV by improving self-esteem

HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY 105, 10550-102 St. (488-5742) • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illnesses. Counselling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy, public awareness campaigns

ICARE 702A, 10242-105 St. (484-1768) • www.icareebd.ca • The Interfaith Centre for AIDS/HIV Resources and

Education (formerly Interfaith Association on AIDS) provides spiritual support and connections for those affected by HIV/AIDS

ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB GLCCCE, Suite 45, 9912-106 St. • Meetings every second Thursday each month

PLAG GLCCCE, Suite 45, 9912-106 St. (462-5958) • Meetings every third Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm • Support/education for parents, families and friends of lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender

THE ROOST 10345-104 St. (426-3150) • Open Sun-Thu 8pm-3am, Fri-Sat 8pm-4am • **TUE: Hot Butt Contest** (8pm-midnight) with DJ Janny • **WED: Amateur strip** with Weena Luv, Sticky Vicky, DJ Alvaro • **THU: Rotating shows** Madonna's review, Sticky's open stage and the Weakest Link game second and last Thursday with DJ Jazzy • **FRI: Upstairs-Euro Blitz**: New European music with DJ Outwattak, DJ Jazzy and male stripper **Downtowns**-female strip • **SAT**: Every Sat live new years • **Upstairs-Monthly theme parties** with DJ Jazzy, new music with DJ Dan and DJ Alvaro • **Downtowns-Retro music** • **SUN**: Betty Ford Hangover Clinic Show Beer Bash, every weekend with DJ Jazzy • **Tue-Thu** 31 (member)/\$4 (non-member), Fri-Sat 34 (member)/\$6 (non-member), Sun \$2

SECRETS BAR AND GRILL 10249-107 St. (990-1818) • Lesbian and gay bar/restaurant

TRANSSEXUAL TRANSCHANGING SUPPORT GROUP egre@transmail.com • Meetings every fourth Tuesday of the month • Information and mutual support for transgendered people in an open, friendly and safe environment. Open to transsexuals, transvestites, cross-dressers, drag queens/queens

WOMEN'S COMING OUT GROUP GLCCCE, 45, 9912-106 St. (488-3234) • A safe place for adult women who are questioning their sexual orientation or just newly lesbian or bisexual. Trained facilitators and speakers. Runs every Mon • Until Dec. 8 (7-30pm) • Free • Pre-register by phone or e-mail: glcccedm@reus.net

YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH GAY AND LESBIAN Community Centre of Edmonton (GLCCCE), 45, 9912-106 St. (488-3234) • www.youthtraged.com/yoy • Every Sat 10-11pm • A facilitated social/support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, straight and questioning youth under the age of 25

SPECIAL EVENTS

CBC/RADIO-CANADA FESTIVAL Edmonton's City Centre Mall, St. Winton Churchill Sq. www.edmonton.ca/cb (CBC Moves Downtown) • Celebration featuring live network and local programming, presented by CBC/Radio-Canada's broadcast centre situated at the east corner facing St. Winton Churchill Sq. Nov. 21-25 • Open house: Showcase of French and English radio and television local and network programming. Meet CBC personalities. Country Check-Up with Rex Murphy, *Hockey Night in Canada* set, live broadcast of *Our Music* with a performance by Tommy Banks, Nov. 23

GOLDEN SHEAR AWARD FILMS Stanley A. Milner Library Theatre, lower level (496-7070) • Selections from the Yorkton Short Film and Video Festival • Fri, Nov. 14 (7pm) • Free

HOT! AMATEUR STRIP LITERS BRAGGARTS (Transsexual) Hotel MacDonald (482-0195) • Presented by the Support Network featuring speaker Catherine Tait. Proceeds go to the 24-hour distress line and the no-fee walk-in counselling program • Thu, Nov. 20 (7.30-9am) • \$70 (each)/\$650 (table of 10)

THEATRE

AMADEUS The Citadel, Shochor Theatre, 9828-101A Ave. (425-1820) • David Storck stars in director Mogens Panych's production of Peter Shaffer's 1980 play (the basis for the Oscar-winning 1984 film) about the medicine but prosperous 18th-century composer Antonio Salieri and his all-consuming jealousy of the seemingly God-given talent of his unscrupulous, lesser-known rival, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart • Until Nov. 30 • Tickets available at Citadel Theatre box office

THE INCREDIBLE ADVENTURES OF MARY JANE MOSQUITO Stanley Milner Library Theatre (420-1257) • Presented by Concrete Theatre • Nov. 15 (2pm and 7pm) • \$12 (adults)/\$10 (students/seniors)/\$7 (child 12 and under)/\$10 (groups of 8 or more) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

LOVE YOU FOREVER AND OTHER STORIES (Ladies Ride) Theatre, 9828-101A Ave. (425-1820) • When Theresa directs Annie Dugan, Chris Bulfoch, Adrienne Merril and Jared Matsunaga-Turnbull in Kim McCaw's stage adaptation of the lives from the pen of Edmonton children's author Robert Munsch • Until Nov. 16 • Tickets available at Citadel Theatre box office

EVENTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to listings@vue.ab.ca. Deadline is Friday at 3pm

CLUBS/LECTURES

THE ALBERTA PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP SUB Alumni Room, U of A Campus (492-6614) • Annual general meeting • Nov. 20 (5pm)

BUILDING INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES Mistah, 10km east of Riverdale Park on Hwy 41 between Vermilion (Hwy 16) and Wainwright (Hwy. 14), (1-780-857-23605) • Information session regarding co-operative housing/eco-village lifestyle, investment in a retreat/ski centre, off-the-grid cottage in semi-wilderness, recreational facilities (skiing, canoeing, hiking, pigstain biling, birdwatching) • Sun, Nov. 16

CHALLENGING OUR CITIZENSHIP **JOYCE EIGHTH AND SELF-DETERMINATION** U of A Campus, www.ualberta.ca/parkland (492-0417/492-8558) • 7th annual fall conference presented by Parkland Institute • Nov. 14-16 • Myer Horowitz Theatre: • Dr. Michael Parenti presents *Democratic Sovereignty and the Art of Empire*; Fri, Nov. 14 (7:30pm) • Naomi Klein presents *Economic Terror*, *Deep Democracy*; Sun, Nov. 16 (3:30pm) • Tickets available at Earth's General Store, Audrey's Books, Volume II, Kunitz Shoes, Parkland

EDMONTON MENDHAM CENTRE FOR NEW COMERS 10010-107A Ave (423-9683/423-9684) • Information session on the International Marketplace

• Tue, Nov. 18 (6pm), Tue, Nov. 25 (6pm)

EDMONTON'S PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT • Oasis Hotel, 13103 Fort Rd (496-6110) Open house to discuss the draft Yellowhead East Design Guidelines; Wed, Nov. 19 (6:30-9pm) • Alberta Solicitor General Staff College, 1568 Hector Rd (496-6120) Discuss the proposed changes to the Area Structure Plan for Windermere area; Thu, Nov. 20 (7pm)

THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA Legislature, Room 512 • Presentation to the Standing Policy Committee on Health and Community Living • Nov. 12 (1:30pm)

THE HEALING POWER OF JOY See What's Happening Downtown

JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY See What's Happening Downtown

KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE 9125-50 St (465-8334) • Open house • Fri, Nov. 21, 28 • Pre-registrations

OPERA LECTURE (492-3093) • Lecture on *Turandot* by Dr. Morris Maduro, presented by Faculty of Extension and Edmonton Opera • Nov. 20 (6:30-9pm) • Free

OPPORTUNITIES UNLIMITED NETWORKING GROUP See What's Happening Downtown

PEACE WITH THE FAITH: HOPE FOR THE FUTURE Strathcona Baptist Church, 8318-104 St, backdoor

(435-0202) • Grief seminar with Rev. Marge Kender • Sat, Nov. 15 (1:30-3pm) • \$35

REPRESENTING THE PROPHET: TRUTHS IN FILM AND ART Edmonton Mediterranean Institute, Tory Breezeway 2, Henry Marshall Tory Building, U of A Campus • Lecture by Earle Waugh • Thu, Nov. 13 (7:30pm)

T.A.L.E.S. EDMONTON (433-2932) • Storytelling Invitation: every 2nd Fri (8pm) • The oral tradition of storytelling (be a listener or a storyteller)

THE CHRYSTAL BLOSSOM MEDITATION SOCIETY, GADEN SAMTEN LING 11403-101 St (479-0014) • Learn about Tibetan Buddhism and meditation with Kusbok Dharmachoe of Nangyal Monastery in India • Every Tues (7-9pm); beginners • Every Wed (7-9pm) and Sun (11am-1pm); advanced

WASKAHEGAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION • Gold Bar Park parking lot (439-1415) Free guided hike/ski, approx. 10km at Gold Bar Park; Nov. 23 (10am)

QUEER LISTINGS

AXIOS (454-8449) • A support group, local chapter of the international organization of Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic Gay and Lesbian Christians

BOOTS AND SADDLES See What's Happening Downtown

BUDDY'S NITE CLUB 11725 Jasper Ave (488-6636) • Open 9-3 • Dancing, strip contests, go-go boys • Every Mon: Free pool. Djs Arrow Chaser, Jilly Pop, Code Red • No membership needed

DIGNITY EDMONTON (482-6845) Support community for lesbian Catholics and friends

DOWN UNDER 12224 Jasper Ave (482-7960) • Steam bath

EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (422-6207) • An organization for gay men and lesbians in business and their non-gay friends to share business knowledge, learn, make friends and network in a positive, proud space where being yourself is the norm

GAY AND LESBIAN COMMUNITY CENTRE IN EDMONTON (GLCC) See What's Happening Downtown

GAY MEN'S OUTREACH CREW (GMOG) See What's Happening Downtown

IRV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY See What's Happening Downtown

ICARE See What's Happening Downtown

ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB See What's Happening Downtown

INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus • Monthly meetings for campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff of the U of A to network and socialize in a supportive environment (fall and winter terms). Contact Kris Wells (kswells@ualberta.ca) or Marjorie Wanhman (mwanham@ualberta.ca) for info

LAMBDA CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CHURCH Carneau United Church, 11148-84 Ave (474-0753) • Every Sun (7pm): Worship services. Serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community

LIVING POSITIVE www.connect.ab.ca/livepos (488-5768) • Edmonton Persons Living with HIV Society. Peer-facilitated support groups, peer counselling • Daily drop-in

THE LOUD 'N' QUEER CABARET The 3rd Space, 11516-103 St (477-5955/420-1750) • Presented by Workshop West Theatre • Nov. 21-22 (8pm) • \$18 (adv), \$21 (door) • Tickets available at Workshop West, TIX on the Square

LUTHERANS CONCERNED www.lcna.org (426-0905) • A spiritual community which gathers monthly for sharing, friendship, individual support and a safe space for our own spiritual questions

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB www.geocities.com/makingwaves_edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Practices every Mon and Thu

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF EDMONTON (429-2321) • Weekly non-denominational church services

PFLAG See What's Happening Downtown

POLICE LIAISON COMMITTEE (421-2277/1-877-882-2011, ext. 2038) • Edmonton Police Service and the gay and lesbian community

PRIME TIMERS (426-7019) • Meetings every second Sunday of the month at 3pm. A social group for gay/bisexual men over 40 and their friends

THE ROOST See What's Happening Downtown

SECRETS BAR AND GRILL See What's Happening Downtown

TRANSEXUAL/TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP See What's Happening Downtown

WOODYS 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Sun-Thu 1-12; Fri Sat 1-3 • Gay nightclub. Every Sun Tue (7-12am): karaoke with Tizzy. Every Wed: game show. Every Fri: free pool. Every weekend: open stage, dance with DJ Arrow Chaser • No membership needed

WOMEN'S COMING OUT GROUP See What's Happening Downtown

YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH See What's Happening Downtown

SPECIAL EVENTS

ALBERTA MARCH OF DIMES Londonderry Mall (1-877-7-caster) • Indoor mall walk, fundraiser for awareness for adult and seniors with disabilities • Wed, Nov. 19 (7-10am)

CBC/RADIO-CANADA FESTIVAL See What's Happening Downtown

CHRISTMAS AT THE MISSION Rundles Mission, N.W. Pigeon Lake, Mission Beach Centre, www.rundlesmission.org • Featuring local artists • Sat, Nov. 15 (11am-4pm)

GOLDEN GEAR AWARD FILMS See What's Happening Downtown

HONOURING DR. RAJ PANNU Best Western Sherwood Hotel and Conference Centre, 2100 Premier Way, Sherwood Park (464-4900) • Dinner in honour of Dr. Raj Pannu • Sat, Nov. 15 (6pm reception, 7pm dinner) • \$50

INTERACTIVE AUDIENCE DEMONSTRATION WITH LYN INGLIS (418-4294) • The Active Life Centre, 25 St. Michael Street, St. Albert. Demonstration; Sun, Nov. 16 (2-4pm) • \$10

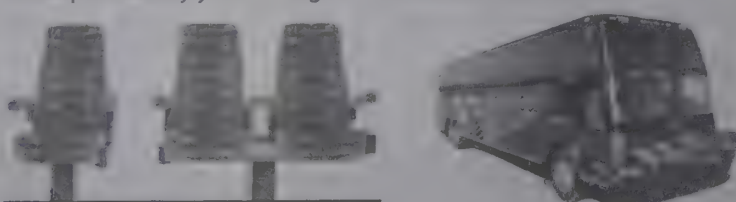
JUST CHRISTMAS The Prince of Wales Armoures, 10440-108A Ave (474-6058/995-6819) • An alternative global crafts and fair trade marketplace, entertainment by Notre Dame des Banieres Choir, Rod Ostad Acoustic Trio, Tracy Brown (harp/vocals), fashion show by Ten Thousand Villages • Nov. 21-22; Fri (6-30pm); Sat (9:30am-5pm) • Free, donations accepted

21ST ANNUAL SPIRIT LIFTER BREAKFAST See What's Happening Downtown

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CLASSIFIEDS

Continued from previous page

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Theatre Network seeks a motivated candidate for the position of General Manager, with previous management experience in the performing arts field. For full details, please visit www.theatrenet.com, or e-mail glenn@theatrenet.com. No phone calls, please. This is a salaried position with benefits. Deadline for application is November 28th, 2003.

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artist to artist

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Glenys at 426-1996/fax 426-2889 or
office@vuv.ab.ca or drop it off at 10301-108 St.
Deadline is noon the Tuesday before publication.

artist to artist

Call for Submissions: The Edmonton Public Library invites emerging artists working in any 2D media to submit proposals to show artwork in the two gallery spaces at the Stanley A. Milner Library. **Deadline: Dec. 8, 2003.** Please forward all inquiries or applications to: Facilities Office, Stanley A. Milner Library, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq, Edmonton, T5J 2Y4
Tel: 496-7080, ext: facility@eppl.ca

Edmonton Playwrights Circle Workshop
At Stanley A. Milner Library, 7pm, Mondays, Nov. 10-Dec. 15. Participation limit: 10. Ph 413-6486 for costs and info. Playwrights are invited to bring a first draft, short scene or vague notion to the table for further development. Alberta Playwrights Network is now accepting participants for the fall session. Meeting every Monday for 6 weeks.

Bored with your job? Need a creative outlet? Could you play a gangster? A gunslinger? Do you like people? Edmonton's longest running special events company is once again adding to its talent roster. Now booking auditions—please call 455-0675, Mon-Fri, 9-4 for information.

Male actor/singer wanted to play Noel Coward in Image Theatre production March/April. Age 30-50, British or good accent. Info, Bob 454-8606.

Learn to voice cartoons, commercials, writing, engineering and more. Various workshops available at www.sharkbytes-studios.com for dates and courses available call Debbie 718-4394

Free dance floor 20 feet by 20 feet for serious dancers. Space must be booked. Jobs of time available. Donations accepted for utilities. 428-9184.

Artists, musicians, dancers, writers, etc. Do you have any experiences with "Paint by Number" art that you could share? Ph. Mike, Ortona Gallery 439-6943.

MUSIC & FILM FESTIVAL AND INDUSTRY CONFERENCE Toronto, Ontario - June 10-12, 2004. **CALL FOR ARTIST SUBMISSIONS!** Download the application form on-line at the North by Northeast home page www.nxnne.com. Or Contact: NXNE Headquarters - 189 Church St., Lower Level, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5B 1Y7 Phone: (416) 863-NXNE (6963) fax: (416) 863-0828, email: info@nxne.com

Ice sculptor needed for winter production @ New City. Please contact Sarah @ nel-4431 or by email sarahbowes@shaw.ca for more information.

Actors needed for a unique play celebrating Edmonton's 100th anniversary. M-F, all ages and cultures encouraged to audition. Alex 492-8714.

Join Arts Outreach at Grant MacEwan College for an arts-oriented trip to New York City Feb. 15-22, 2004. \$1995. For info call 497-4303.

artist to artist

One Voice, One Dream Productions is holding auditions for actors, singers, dancers and musicians. Call Nicole 434-2979, Cody 902-1525.

THROUGH THE EYES OF THE ARTIST: Call for adults with developmental disabilities to participate in a project exploring citizenship and discrimination. Nina Haggerty Director for the Arts, 474-7611.

Chinese Canadians: Did your family run a Chinese Restaurant in Alberta? Did you spend a lot of your childhood helping out rolling eggrolls, devening shrimp and waiting tables? A local filmmaker wants to hear and document your stories. chopsey@interbaun.com

Actors, cameramen, editors, administrator wanted: Movie to be shot in Edmonton. 15 actors (25-65 yrs) e-m: Kam_mane@tvaloo.com

Snap Gallery public primmaking workshops: Fibre Art Series: Nov. 18, Nov. 26, Dec. 2. Ph Elvira at 423-1492 for info.

Actors needed for a unique play celebrating Edmonton's 100th Anniversary. M-F, all ages, cultures encouraged to audition. Ph Alex 492-8714.

Dancers and performing artists needed. Local Choreographer seeking performers for a winter production at New City. Interested? Sarah @ 435-4431 or e-m: sarahbowes@shaw.ca

musicians

One Voice One Dream Productions is looking for an experienced pianist for upcoming charity show. Call Cody @ 902-1525.

Drummer wanted for rock and roll project. Hard hitting, good temp. Serious inquiries only, 18-30. Inlt: Sep SPT GN'R 483-2157.

Female singer seeking rock band, or to form band, can harmonize, influences from '80s metal to Broadway -481-4866 taojkl1@yahoo.com

Tilo Paiz is forming a new Latin jazz-fusion band and is looking for keyboard/piano, bass, sax, trumpet, flute... Interested: 438-5446 daytime.

MUSIC & FILM FESTIVAL AND INDUSTRY CONFERENCE Toronto, Ontario - June 10-12, 2004. **CALL FOR ARTIST SUBMISSIONS!** Download the application form on-line at the North by Northeast home page www.nxnne.com. Or Contact: NXNE Headquarters - 189 Church St., Lower Level, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5B 1Y7 Phone: (416) 863-NXNE (6963) fax: (416) 863-0828, email: info@nxne.com

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volunteers

Stage crew needed: Dedicated and committed stage crew volunteers are needed for a unique play celebrating Edmonton's 100th anniversary. No experience necessary. Ph Curtis 437-2913.

Adult Day Support program needs friendly Visiting Volunteers for frail seniors commitment of 4 hours per week, call Gwen @ 434-4747.

Volunteer position: Movements is currently accepting applications for the position of **Volunteer Manager.** The Successful applicant should possess excellent interpersonal communication and leadership skills. Experience preferred. Phone: 415-5211.

Travel the World! Enjoy meeting people from other cultures by volunteering in the Host Friendship Program. Help a newcomer adjust to their new life in Canada. No second language required. Call the Host Program at 424-3545.

Can you spare one morning or afternoon a week? **The Learning Centre Literacy Association** is looking for people to help adults develop their literacy skills. Volunteer at the Centre and help others make positive changes for themselves and their communities. Contact Phyllis at 429-0675.

volunteers

One Voice One Dream Productions is looking for an experienced pianist for upcoming charity show. Call Cody @ 902-1525.

Change for Children needs volunteers to take on short and longer term projects around our office. Please call 448-1505 for info.

Chinese Canadians
Did your family run a Chinese Restaurant in Alberta? Did you spend a lot of your childhood helping out rolling eggrolls, devening shrimp and waiting tables? Do you want to share your experiences? A local filmmaker wants to hear and document your stories. Contact chopsey@interbaun.com

ESL Tutors urgently needed! If you have been looking for a volunteer opportunity, this may be the one for you. Call P.A.L. at 424-5514 to help someone learn English as a second language. Training and materials are provided.

Can you spare one morning or afternoon a week? **The Learning Centre Literacy Association** is looking for people to help adults develop their literacy skills. Volunteer at the Centre and help others make positive changes for themselves and their communities. Contact Phyllis at 429-0675.

Brain Neurobiology Research Program at U of A seeks individuals suffering from **SOCIAL PHOBIA** for research study Ph 407-3906. Reimbursement provided.

Volunteer with immigrant pre-schoolers. Volunteers will work with Early Childhood Educator to assist with activities that encourage early literacy development and school readiness for children ages newborn to six. Call Suzanne at 423-9677.

Brain Neurobiology Research Program at U of A seeks individuals suffering from **SEVERE PMS** for research study Ph 407-3775. Reimbursement.

Brain Neurobiology Research Program at U of A seeks individuals suffering from **PANIC ATTACKS** for research study Ph 407-3221. Reimbursement.

HEALTHY VOLUNTEERS required for research studies with the **Brain Neurobiology Research Program** at U of A. Ph 407-3775 or 407-3221. Reimbursement provided.

Volunteer drivers wanted: Join our team. We supply a gas honorarium to cover cost. Flexible volunteer hours. Call Mon-Fri 8:30-4:30 732-1221 for information.

Coats for Kids and Families: Donate gently worn coats to those who require them. Drop coats off at any Page the Cleaner in Edmonton

Volunteer with immigrant pre-schoolers. Volunteers will work with Early Childhood Educator to assist with activities that encourage early literacy development and school readiness for children ages newborn to six. Call Suzanne at 423-9677.

Become a mentor in a program for immigrant youth. Volunteer mentors will work with small groups or one-on-one with immigrant and refugee youth in Grades 1-6. Call Suzanne 423-9677

volunteers

The Association of Adult Day Support Programs is a non-profit organization that provides seniors with a structured recreational and educational day program. Volunteers are essential to providing the best possible program for these seniors. If you could spare 4 daytime hours a week to play cards, do woodcrafts or sit and visit our clients. Please call Gwen @ 434-4747 for more info on how you can make a difference.

Join a team of homework club volunteer tutors for immigrant youth! Help with literacy, math, science and writing at Queen Elizabeth High, Edmonton. Klenzville Centre for Newcomers or Dickinson Mall late afternoons or evenings. Call Suzanne, 423-9677.

Become a mentor in a program for immigrant youth. Volunteer mentors will work with small groups or one-on-one with immigrant and refugee youth in Grades 1-6. Call Suzanne at 423-9677.

Help immigrants and refugees improve their English skills! Volunteers needed to tutor in our conversation program, assist in classes for seniors and teach grammar classes at the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers. Morning. Afternoon and evening times available. Call Suzanne at 423-9677

THE SUPPORT NETWORK
24 hour distress line offer volunteers: training in communication skills, crisis and suicide intervention training. Visit www.thesupportnetwork.com for details or call The Support Network at 732-6648.

The Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton is in need of volunteers to take calls on our 24-hour Crisis Line. The hours are self-determined and you can work from your own home. For more information Phone 423-4102.

Chrysalis is looking for volunteers. Chrysalis is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to providing services to citizens who have disabilities. Please contact 454-9656.

The Clinical Services Division of the Faculty of Education U of A, is now accepting referrals for individual child and adult personal counselling, family, and couples counselling. Although there is a once-a-year \$50 administration fee, counselling services are provided at no charge. For info call 492-3746.

SEE NEXT PAGE

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alt sex column

By ANDREA NEMERSON

Survivors' row

Dear Andrea:

Recently my wife and were discussing things we did as children that we had never told anyone before, I told her some pretty embarrassing things. When she told me some of hers, I was shocked. When she was nine and her brother was seven, she made him have sex (actual penetration) with her on several occasions. She says at the time she really enjoyed it but feels guilty now. She's never talked to him about it. She also remembers spending the night with a girlfriend and they'd hump and finger each other. Would she have had to have been sexually abused or exposed to these things to have known how to do them at such a young age? She says she doesn't remember any abuse but we are both very curious.

Love, Shocked and Wondering

Dear S&W:

Put the question down and back away slowly. It's natural—unavoidable, really—to be curious, but at this point it's better just to let it go. Everyone knows that children only act out sexually after they've been abused or molested by adults or much older children, but everyone is wrong. It's entirely possible that the little devil got the ideas all by herself.

It's also entirely possible that she was exposed to sexual images or acts as a young child, but where could she possibly go with this now? She has no other symptoms. She doesn't remember anything and, contrary to popular understanding, children rarely repress traumatic memories to the point where they have no idea the bad thing ever happened. So the most likely outcome of an attempted investigation would be something like this: your wife, who is currently fine, would get to redefine herself as a victim of... something. Someone. Her father, uncles, neighbours, clergy and family friends would fall under a cloud of suspicion, never to be fully exonerated. ("Have you stopped beating your wife yet?") The brother, who actually was subject to premature sexual attention (what did she mean, "made him have sex with her?"), would turn against his sister. Any other siblings would either join your wife in her victimhood or align against her. The mother would be torn between her husband and her children and end up turning against or abandoning someone. This is what happens. This is

not what you want.

So your choices are: (a) you and your wife continue to muse vaguely upon her childhood behaviour, but go on with your lives as normal; or (b) she tears her psyche and her family apart, to no particular end, as no one will ever know whether she was in fact abused. My choice is (a). What's yours?

Love, Andrea

Dear Andrea:

My interest in sex was warped by a pervert who liked little girls. This obsession stopped when I was 12. However, after almost 16 years of being pretty much frigid, I find myself with an almost constant need of the "attentions" of my husband. My question is this: is it normal for someone who has gone through what I've gone through to suddenly become interested in the needs of my body? Am I messed up somehow? Does this awareness mean that I am ready to heal? Or have I just become the kind of slut "he" always told me I was? I know this kind of question is not the kind anyone wants to answer, but I really need to know.

Love, Survivor

Dear Vlvor:

I was just about to get out of answering your question with the usual "You really need to talk to a therapist about that" dodge when I realized you really don't. I've got to hope that you have talked to a therapist at some point, preferably at great length, but you and I can handle this one little question on our own.

Slut? What slut? You're having sex with your husband. Hell, I do that (well, with my husband, anyway) and I'm no kind of slut at all. You may be feeling out of control, you may even be a little out of control, but you're hardly blowing strangers in truckstop bathrooms. There are survivors who do just that, you know, along with every other self-destructive behaviour you could name. If having a whole lot of (even "too much") sex with your own spouse, who loves you, is the worst thing you're doing, you're doing pretty well.

Before I really do get in over my head here, I'm going to recommend a book, *The Survivor's Guide to Sex: How to Have an Empowered Sex Life After Child Sexual Abuse*, by Staci Haines, who really is an expert on the subject. The other thing I can say is that rediscovering your sexuality 16 long years after the abuse ended seems neither anomalous nor pathological to me. I'm glad it came back, I hope you are too, and if you continue to feel like you can't control it or it becomes a problem for you or your marriage, go see someone. Good luck.

Love, Andrea @

Andrea Nemerson writes and teaches in San Francisco. You can e-mail her a question at andrea@altsexcolumn.com.

CLASSIFIEDS

Continued from previous page

services

Overwhelmed! • Are you faced with challenges in your life? • Would you like to talk to a qualified therapist for no fee! • The Support Network offers a Walk-in Counselling Program. • For info about hours and wait times call The Support Network at 482-0198.

volunteers

Join a team of homework club volunteer tutors for immigrant youth! Help with literacy, math, science and writing at Queen Elizabeth High, Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers or Dickinson Mall late afternoons or evenings. Call Suzanne, 423-9677.

Adult Day Support program needs friendly visiting volunteers for frail seniors, commitment of 4 hrs per week. Call Gwen @ 434-4747.

OUTGOING and enjoy working with people? Like science and educating others? Dynamic hosting and educational volunteer positions available @ Odyssey (tm). Contact Volunteer Resources at 452-9100.

Help immigrants and refugees improve their English skills. Volunteers needed to tutor in our conversation program, assist in classes for seniors and teach grammar classes at the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers. Morning, afternoon and evening times available. Call Suzanne at 423-9677.

HEALTHY VOLUNTEERS required for research studies with the Brain Neurobiology Research Program at U of A. Ph 407-3775. Reimbursement will be provided.

Brain Neurobiology Research Program at U of A seeks individuals suffering from SEVERE PMS for research study (Ph 407-3775). Reimbursement provided.

Brain Neurobiology Research Program at U of A seeks individuals suffering from PANIC ATTACKS for research study (Ph 407-3221). Reimbursement provided.

Solidarity WORKS! action project for youth to build active skills and get involved with the labour movement. Visit www.all.org.

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2) contest winners must be at least 18 years of age.
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CLASSIFIEDS

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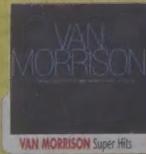
WOMEN & SONGS- 60's GIRL GROUPS Various Artists



LITTLE FEAT Dore Chicken



JONI MITCHELL Hejira



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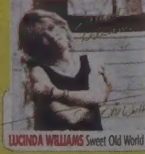
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Creepin' On
Ah Come Up
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Candy-O

JOE COCKER
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DR. HOOK
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BOB DYLAN
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Slow Train Coming
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